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MARY DENIS MAHONEY

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THE MONTH is edited and published from 31 Farm Street, London, W.1, GROsvenor 5971 All subscriptions may be addressed to the Manager, THE MONTH, at this address. The annual subscription is 34s 6d, U.S.A. \$6.

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VENERABLE MARY OF THE INCARNATION

By

MARY DENIS MAHONEY

IT WOULD NEED a flamboyant mystic indeed, so one would think, to stand out in the jostling crowd of *beati* that thronged the spiritual highways of the seventeenth century. For mysticism in the France of the Medici was very much *à la mode*. It was "the thing"—one might say the fashion, and what Frenchman wants to be out of fashion? Consequently mystics abounded, both false mystics and true. Mistress and servant, soldier and statesman, all alike experienced supernatural dreams, divine touches, interior locutions. Into such an environment was born Marie Guyart who was to become one of the greatest mystics of this extraordinary mystic age.¹

And yet, although there is much that is unusual about the paths God destined for Marie, there is little that is flamboyant about her. The various manifestations verging on hysteria which characterised so many contemporaries are singularly lacking in Marie. The extraordinariness of her graces is matched only by the extraordinariness of her response—a response vital, faithful and, above all, remarkably controlled. Even in the face of an imminent ecstasy Marie maintains that poise and balance which is one of her most individual characteristics. If she stands out from her contemporaries, it is not because she is more colourful but rather because she is more tranquil, with that delicate poise of spirit which so aptly fits her for her mystic graces.

Wife, widow, cloistered religious, missionary—Marie passed through all these states in turn, states which in God's providence did not contradict each other but prepared and reinforced her vocation. God would have all; God would be all. And in

¹ Marie Guyart was born in Tours in 1599. At the age of seventeen, despite her longing for religious life, she became the wife of Claude Martin, a Tourangelles silk merchant. In 1619 a son, Claude, was born, and shortly thereafter Monsieur Martin died, leaving Marie free to follow her spiritual attractions.

establishing His absolute dominion over her soul, He led her in great zig-zag lines which only a soul made docile by faith would have followed.

Her conscious entrance into the mystic way occurred on the vigil of the feast of the Incarnation in the year 1620. Marie was at that time a widow of twenty, harassed by the demands of a failing business and the care of her child who was less than a year old. It was in order to settle some business matters that she walked eastward along the busy streets of Tours on that memorable morning. As she walked, suddenly, without warning or explanation, the visible world fell away from her eyes, and to the eyes of her soul there appeared a world of spirit, so true, so terrible, so utterly real that until the end of her life the impression was never effaced from her heart. There she stood, stock-still in that busy street, while her first great mystical experience swept over her. And as the women with their market baskets brushed past her and the workmen trudged by in their clumsy shoes, Marie saw her soul plunged in the Blood of the Son of God. Before her were the sins of her life—each one clear, distinct, unmitigated, and so horrible in its aspect that, as she writes, "I think I would have died of fright had not the goodness of God sustained me."

It was at once solace and new shame to see that it was for her, in the abjection of her nothingness and the wilfulness of her sin, that the Precious Blood had been shed. She was at once humbled and exalted, and fumbled, as she will do so often later, to explain this experience which to the end will defy human expression.

There is no human language to express it; but to see a God of infinite goodness and incomprehensible purity offended by a mere worm surpasses the very horror itself; more than that, to see a God made man dying to expiate sin, pouring out all His Precious Blood to appease His Father and so to reconcile sinners to Him—one cannot describe what the soul feels at this wonder. And beyond this, to see that one is personally responsible and if she were the only one who had sinned that the Son of God would have done for her what He had done for all—it is this which consumes and annihilates the soul.¹

¹ All references are to the biography written by her son Claude: *Vie de la Venerable Mère Marie de l'Incarnation*, 1677. The translations are my own. I am also indebted throughout this article to the work of Dom Albert Jamet, O.S.B., *Marie de l'Incarnation: Ecrits Spirituels et Historiques*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1929-1939).

When she came to herself, she found a new creature, so strong had the divine action been upon her. All that she had ever thought herself to have done for God, all that had appeared to her to be love for Him was ashes beneath her feet, while within her burned a flame which left no portion of her body free from the anguish of love. In her bewilderment she adds, "And what is more incomprehensible, this mercilessness seems sweet."

We are singularly fortunate in possessing Marie's own account of this initial grace and of the many others that follow it. Living as she did in the age of memoirs and diaries, it is not surprising to find that at least twice during her lifetime her confessors (Père Raymond de St. Bernard, a Feuillant Father, and Père Jérôme Lallemant, a Jesuit) ordered her to write accounts of her spiritual life. These accounts, in addition to several hundred letters and some miscellaneous spiritual notes, provide the source for the extensive life of Marie completed by her Benedictine son, Dom Claude, shortly after her death. Marie's prose, like everything else about her, slips the bonds of artificial convention and frees itself from the "ornamental flowerets," from the "emblems and allegories" which decorated much of the religious prose of her day. But, unfortunately, she leaves much unsaid; she wrote under obedience, despite great repugnance, and with the sole purpose of satisfying her directors concerning her spiritual life. Such a purpose naturally excludes the details of daily life, and the biographer who attempts to piece together Marie's exterior life must often walk cautiously amid conjecture.

And yet in the realm of the spiritual, Marie's memoirs leave little to be desired. Her limpid prose, at once free and strong, is extraordinarily adequate for the task before her. She possesses a singular gift for descriptive expression and analogy, and also an ability for objective analysis which enables her not only to describe what has happened to her but also to evaluate and classify it. When, then, Marie labels this vision of the Precious Blood as the day of her "conversion," we must concede its importance even while hesitating over the meaning of the word "conversion." That this was in any way a turning from sin to virtue is manifestly false; Marie's life had always been one of unswerving fidelity to God. Her son Claude himself explains it as his mother no doubt meant it: "By this conversion we must understand the firm resolution which she took to think no longer

of the world with its cares and hopes in order to give herself wholly to God and to live solely for His Love,"¹

This is precisely what she set out to do. Her eyes had been opened and her vanities torn from her; so that she conceived a great horror of acting solely for her own interests and pleasure. The empty ceremony of Tourangelle society became a distasteful burden, and more and more she withdrew into the solitude of her father's simple household. When at last her period of mourning for her deceased husband was over and she put away her widow's cape, it was only to assume clothes even more unattractive; her gowns became less full than fashion demanded; her bodices were less ornamented with the delicate lace and heavy ribbons so popular in her day. To all the entreaties and reproaches of her family and her friends she turned a deaf ear. She had no intention of marrying again, she assured them, without being able to explain that this choice was not hers but God's, that it was He who was demanding of her a life totally consecrated to His service—a life of prayer, a life of suffering, a life utterly sensitised to the Spirit of God who stirred and moved within her with increasing force.

This direct operation of the Spirit within her neither frightened nor puzzled her. She accepted it without question as she continued throughout her life to accept both the graces and privations which God lavished upon her. In an age which bristled with spiritual directors, Marie kept her own counsel. It was neither pride nor diffidence which caused her to act thus, but the clear-eyed candour of a child who saw no problem in carrying out with loving fidelity what God so obviously asked of her. Although she was overwhelmed with grace and enveloped in mystic prayer, no mention of any of this was made to her director. The Holy Spirit was her only guide. She felt no need for any other.

The manner of life which she had chosen to live at this time was entirely compatible with the direction in which God was leading her. She remained in her father's house, caring for her child, helping with the household tasks, visiting the poor, and spending long hours in that tranquil union with God which now formed her ordinary state. Doubtless she looked happily ahead to a whole life lived in this even tenor, a life which quite satisfied

¹ *Vie*, p. 29.

the cloistral aspirations of her heart. It must then have come with something of a shock that, when her sister asked her to move to her busy household to help with the management of the family, the Spirit within her impelled her to say yes. Imprudent, disagreeable, capricious as such an action must have seemed, Marie had no doubt that it was God's wish for her, and for God's wishes she had but a single answer. "It is He who gives the orders and we who must obey," she wrote later, summing up succinctly her whole code of action. To the Buisson household she went, without a single backward glance at the solitude, the silence, the hiddenness which but a short while before she had thought to be hers forever.

Thus began in circumstances singularly unsuitable the most extraordinary period of Marie's asceticism. Claude, Marie's sister, had felt sure that she could count on her generosity, her talent for work, her devotion to duty. What Claude had not counted on was the presence of a saint in her house, and this, apparently, despite Marie's extraordinary prayer and penance, was a secret that God kept from the worldly and self-seeking eyes of the Buisson family. Even in these infelicitous surroundings, her prayer and mortification never diminished. Beneath her plain dress were the hair shirt and chain for which her director had given his permission, within her cupboard was her well-used discipline, while the sweetness of God's presence was the air she breathed.

It is at this time that the distinctively Christo-centric nature of her spirituality begins to appear. When she had been living with the Buissons little over a year, she describes a "new gift of prayer," consisting in a "union with Our Lord Jesus Christ touching His Sacred Mysteries from His birth to His death. . . . I experienced in this gift of prayer that this Divine Saviour was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. . . . I entered into Him, and by Him and in Him were disclosed to me these divine mysteries by which I live, and my soul was fed."¹

With the deepening of the union of her soul with the spirit of Christ comes an increased passivity before the Divine action which became more and more powerful. The initiative was entirely in God's hands now, and Marie became daily more aware that her part was only to consent. There were months of grace upon grace, as God revealed Himself to her one day as

¹ *Vie*, p. 37.

Incarnate Love, another as a great sea of purity, again as a suffering God enduring His Passion. She, abashed before such prodigality, sought in vain for a suitable response. How, she wondered, was she ever to give a total gift of herself to this God Who had given Himself so completely to her? As she probed for an answer, there came to her the thought of making privately into the hands of her director the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. But even this thought still left her restless and unsatisfied.

During these days she lived, as she says, "in expectation," without being able to explain the source or term of her desires. She suffered without being able to understand her suffering. Although God seemed to communicate Himself to her with rare liberality, she could not be satisfied. Her soul tended constantly toward a more intense communication; but, even more, toward a communication that was in some way different from any that she had hitherto experienced. "I was filled and encompassed with a heavenly sweetness," she writes, "and although I felt so entirely surrendered to God, my heart yearned to be united to Him in a wholly different fashion." How long she remained in this restless anxiety we cannot say, but one day it ended as quickly as it had begun. As Marie prayed, clinging to a desire for she knew not what, begging for what she did not understand, she heard Our Lord speak to her interiorly. The words she heard were the words of the Prophet Osee: "I will espouse thee to Me in faith; I will espouse thee to Me forever." The mystery was ended and the vision was clear before her: that toward which her soul was tending with the persistent wilfulness of a compass was espousals with the Son of God.

With these words came an entire change in her interior dispositions; her occupation was no longer with the Humanity of Christ but with His Divinity. Whatever she had known of prayer before seemed nothing compared with what she now experienced. In trying to express this, she writes:

I no longer felt the Spirit of God stealing through me with sweetness; for now as soon as I prepared for my actual prayer, I had to go to some hidden place and sit down or find a support, for otherwise I would have fallen in front of everyone. I felt myself drawn powerfully and instantaneously without having the time or ability to make any interior or exterior act. I seemed to be wholly lost in God, who withdrew all my power to act. It is a

suffering of love which we must bear as He pleases, for we cannot extricate ourselves. It seems to the soul that she has swooned before her Beloved, made so weak by love that she cannot speak. Thus I remained for an hour, or perhaps two. Toward the end I felt a great sweetness of spirit and I was amazed when I found myself once more in my usual state of intimacy with Our Lord which, however, had become stronger and more powerful.¹

This state of prayer affected her body as well, and although she practised the most rigorous penances, she writes that none of these weakened her as much as this intense recollection. God no longer came to her sweetly, in a calm peace, but brusquely, almost with rudeness, vanquishing her liberty, seizing her soul as captive to His power. But through it all her exterior life was not diminished. Her penances continued with her director's approval; and her works of charity, now more works of love than ever before, were, if anything, increased. She found in them solace and relief from the flame which consumed her.

Her soul veered toward God with an action that never ceased, and love was her only passion. She walked always in God's presence, and yet, as she is so careful to say, in a way that was wholly spiritual—"in the understanding and the will," for the imagination played no part in this. At some times more than others, she was aware of Jesus very near her, at her side, accompanying her in her duties. This presence and company were so sweet, she writes, "that I cannot express it as it really was."²

Her house was in order; her world was at peace. With her days filled from end to end, with never a moment to herself, with silence an impossibility, her union with God was undisturbed. She had cried, "Take care of me then, Oh my Love, for you have given me care of so many things," and God had heard the cry. He had further promised that at a time that He willed their espousals would be completed, and meanwhile He had said, "Peace to this house." She had entered, so it seemed, into the land of promise, for so firmly was her soul established in Divine Love that she wondered if any power on earth were strong enough to move it. Suddenly, without warning, without reason, this dwelling which had seemed so invincible shook about her and above her, and Marie was swept into a whirlwind of temptation to which there seemed no ending.

¹ *Vie*, p. 50.

² *Ibid*, p. 52.

Everything which formerly had made her joyous now began to fill her with weariness and loathing. The thought of those austerities which but a week before had been for her a source of joy now made her writhe in rebellion. Each night she turned to the hard board which for so long a time had been her bed and revolt swept over her in waves; each night there was the same grim battle, but each night when finally she fell asleep it was without having permitted herself any alleviation.

In the morning she rose, unrested, unconsolated, to face another day. While the streets were still grey with the first dull light of dawn, she walked in a chill of body and heart toward the chapel where God had always awaited her. She looked ahead to the long hours of the day and found nothing to sustain her. "It seems to me," she writes, "that I was like those poor beggars who go trembling from door to door." Always before when she was not sure of her path, she had had recourse to Dom Raymond, and under the directions of obedience had found peace; but now the thought of such a solution filled her soul with repugnance. To confess all this—the weariness, the temptations, the near-despair! To find words to express it and then to drag this squalor out of the depths of her heart and spread it before the eyes of him who for a single fault would humble her to the ground! To be humiliated, scorned, despised: all that she had prayed for so ardently, she now turned from in sickness of soul.

As she struggled to force herself to go to Dom Raymond and open her heart to him, another temptation, more insidious than all the others, came upon her: was not all that she had revealed to her director in the past but a piece of deception? Graces in prayer, hunger for austerities, wishing always to be the least of all—were not these but the lies and subterfuges which she had used to appear holy in his eyes? What use of saying more when she could not trust her own thoughts. But the conviction that in obedience she would find God's will drove her forward, and on her knees before Dom Raymond, the inexorable, she told her miserable story. As he listened, he saw far beneath the surface of her words and discerned the heroic proportions of the trial which God had let fall upon her. For once there were no harsh words; he confirmed her in the path that she was travelling, explaining that all this was but the devil's way to make her give up all that was most precious. Despite his kindness, however, her

soul remained in the hands of God where no human solace could reach it. She rose from her knees unconsolated, seemingly unstrengthened, and in sheer weariness of heart abandoned herself once more to God. But with this final act of hope came the grace of which she had almost despaired: God removed the darkness and sent peace once again.

Now God's sunshine was about her, and the old familiarity of love was resumed. The trial had done its work well, for she was saturated with the realisation of her own nothingness, and, despite the liberty which God permitted her, she was often crushed before His Infinite Majesty. In this new light she saw her own powerlessness more clearly than ever before, realising the profundity of those words, "We can do nothing of ourselves." She found pride skulking in unexpected quarters: in the way she appropriated credit to herself for those qualities both interior and exterior which were God's undeserved gifts to her; in her desire for esteem and the secret complacency which she took in herself. God in His own time willed to free her from these subtle temptations, for one day as she opened a book to the words of the psalm: *Nisi dominus aedificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam*, she was suddenly liberated from the blindness engendered by her pride.

In these months of preparation for her espousals our Lord became for her now more than ever "the Incarnate Word." Her devotion to the Incarnation was to the essential mystery itself: the indescribable fact of this Divine Utterance taking upon Himself human flesh and yet remaining in the bosom of the Father. It is this emphasis on Christ as the Divine Word of the Trinity which lends an aura of reverence to her spirituality. It is the majesty of God which is so impressed upon her spirit, and more and more she finds her soul borne by Christ, Incarnate Word, to the home of the Eternal Three.

It is this increasing tendency to find rest only in the Trinity which prepares her soul for the peak of mystic revelation in which she will see ("in a manner wholly spiritual") the very heart of the Divine activity proceeding without cessation in the bosom of the Trinity. Fortunately, she has left us a detailed account of that first vision of the Trinity which occurred on Pentecost Monday of 1625 in the Feuillant church where God had given her so many signal graces. As she knelt in her usual

place, her eyes travelled over the curiously carved angels which formed the base of the massive candlesticks; suddenly she was wrenched from this world of reality and borne into an indescribable realm of the spirit. Thirty years later in an attempt to recapture for her son one of the most glorious moments of her life, she writes:

. . . in a moment my eyes were closed and my spirit was raised and absorbed in the sight of the most holy and august Trinity in a manner that I cannot express. In this moment all the powers of my soul were stayed, enduring the impression which was given to them of this Sacred Mystery. It was an impression without form but clearer and more intelligible than any light, which convinced me at first sight that my soul was in truth; there, in a moment, it made me see the Divine intercourse which the Three Divine Persons have together.¹

So the woman of fifty-five begins to describe the incredible experience of the girl of twenty-five. If she stumbles in her narration, it is not because the vision has dimmed but because as she herself so often maintained, "there is no human language to express it." Nowhere does she draw the line more clearly between the mystic and the theologian. She does not profess to explain, only to describe, and with that terminology which is not the studied language of the theologian but the analogous expression of the mystic.

She must have wondered, surely, if this were not the promised grace of espousals, but even as the thought rose within her a divine wisdom warned her that her preparations were not yet complete, that the work of purgation was not yet consummated. There was more to come: more love, more glory, and more—much more—of the cross.

It was within weeks of this first vision of the Trinity that Marie again felt her soul descend into that mysterious and terrible abyss from which only the arms of God could draw her. Once again all human and divine consolation was deprived her and she trembled at the thought of her own presumption in believing that she had been the recipient of unusual graces. "I was abandoned and totally deprived of all the graces which I had received," she writes, adding "even the remembrance of them redoubled my pains, for I was tempted and even persuaded to believe that

¹ *Vie*, p. 77.

they were not true graces but no more than a loss of time in which I had amused myself." For this grief there was no solace, and even the direction of Dom Raymond did no more than make her shrink into herself like some poor wounded creature who has suffered so much that even the gentlest touch has become an unendurable agony. Trembling with fear even for her salvation, she had no need to turn to God, for the thought of God had never left her. He was in the air she breathed, not for comfort but for further crucifixion. She writes: "What caused me the greatest pain was that it seemed to me that I did not love Him."¹

Despite these trials which could not but have reacted on her physically, her exterior manner remained unchanged. That balanced control of her emotion, which was such a characteristic note of her spirituality, was never broken, and, apparently, no one in the Buisson household was aware of the interior storms which swept over her for months at a time. What the Buissons did become aware of, however, was Marie's remarkable business sense; and Paul Buisson, with his own talent for never losing a good bargain, "promoted" (ambiguous word!) Marie from her position as *châtelaine* to business manager for his transport company. It was, indeed, as they pointed out to her, an honour and an opportunity—an honour and opportunity from which Marie's whole being recoiled. She accepted only because of her vow of obedience which made it clear that this was God's will for her. God's will had now become the very warp and woof of her existence, as one by one all other natural and supernatural supports were removed from her. God's will was, in truth, all there was to cling to when the very promises of God seemed contradictory. Had He not promised her the deepest possible union with Himself? Had He not even given her hope when she had pleaded with Him to take her out of the world and let her become a religious? And yet with each divine promise, He pushed her deeper into the affairs of men, withdrew more inexorably the possibility of that silence and solitude in which alone, she felt, He could be found. And now, less alone but more lonely than ever, she took up her stand on the wharves of the Loire to do a man's business in the toughness of a man's world and relinquish, perhaps forever, the only aspiration of her heart.

The two years which followed, years worthless in Marie's

¹ *Vie*, p. 95.

sight with their increasing preoccupation with business matters, were in God's sight a precious period of preparation, disposing Marie as nothing else could for that complete abandonment to God so necessary for her final espousals. Two years, almost to the day since her first vision of the Trinity, God drew her once more into Himself and fulfilled His Promise: "I will espouse thee to Me forever." In the account of her spiritual life written for her director in 1633, we can catch the freshness and indescribable wonder of her soul in the face of this consummate grace which had been so long in preparation:

Our Lord again raised me and in a most loving way to a knowledge of the Trinity, Whose grandeur was revealed to me in the unity of the Three Divine Persons, and altogether differently from what I had hitherto been taught of it with respect to knowledge and love. The first time it was more a question of admiration rather than of love or possession, but this time love predominated. I saw the internal communication of the Three Persons as I had previously, but I was more fully instructed concerning the generation of the Word. . . . I forgot the Father and the Holy Spirit and lost myself in the Divine Word who caressed my soul as though it belonged wholly to Him. He made me understand that He was all mine and I all His through a powerful union which held me captive. Even more, it seemed to me that He was given to me to be my own, to enjoy at my leisure and, if I dare say so, that all His goods were now our mutual possessions. . . . It was then that I knew experimentally that the Word is truly the Spouse of the soul.¹

With the conclusion of this vision, Marie reached that peak of mystical union called by theologians spiritual marriage. The grace for which other great mystics have waited until the close of their lives was given to this young widow before she had reached her twenty-eighth birthday.² Forty-five years of life

¹ *Vie*, p. 107.

² Although Claude Martin uses the term "spiritual marriage," he attempts to water down the meaning of the term by suggesting two spiritual marriages: this grace, then, is a kind of initiation for the second marriage which will occur later on. Dom Jamet points out the uselessness of the term if it is to be given such a dual meaning; Jamet, following Sandreau, has no hesitation in employing the term in its full significance but warns against making it consonant with "full" or "transforming" union. Such fine distinction of terminology must be left to the theologians; it seems sufficient here to indicate that for Marie this second vision of the Trinity did constitute a state of union with the Incarnate Word as her spouse. Cf. *Vie*, p. 127; Jamet, *Ecrits* I, 251-2; A. Sandreau, *Les Degrés de la Vie Spirituelle* (1920), II, 237.

stretched before her, years to be lived in the heart of this mysterious and exalted union. Here, perhaps, we may find a subtle boundary between the essentially contemplative character of Marie's early years and the manifestly apostolic character of her later period. This is not to suggest, of course, that these terms are in any way mutually exclusive. And yet in following Marie's life we cannot but be struck by the chronological order of events and graces. First came those graces centred on the mysteries of the Redemption; then followed those concerning the Divine attributes; and ultimately occurred the two visions of the Trinity which led to her espousals. A few years following this last grace she entered the Ursuline monastery, the "paradise" which she had so long desired. Yet far from being paradisaical years, her first years as a religious are among the most difficult of her life. In the midst of everything she felt sure would make her radiantly happy, she is desolate, lonely, restless, and almost despairing. Her director is taken from her; her superior who had hitherto been her guiding model becomes a further source of distress for her; above all, her twelve-year-old son is an unending source of anguish.

These are strange years; years which, it would seem, God used to test the strength of His own graces to her, and also years which prepare her for what is to come. How often, in those long bleak hours in which she could not pray, she must have wandered in her own past, admiring and envying a little that lively young widow, Madame Martin, overwhelmed by graces, longing for humiliations, and convinced that nothing could be difficult in the service of God. How often, too, she must have looked ahead, wondering what would come of it all, trying to believe in the sufficiency of God's grace, desperately trying to live one day at a time lest peering into the future she might be tempted to despair.

But out of these years emerged the religious whom God destined to be His first woman missionary in that strange land, "terrible yet pitiful," which men called Canada. Hers was indeed a unique vocation demanding unique graces. Having broken the bonds of convention by leaving her widowhood (and with it her small son) to enter an enclosed convent, she was called upon to break further bonds to prove to all the world that a cloistered nun might, in God's plan, become in actual fact a missionary.

Her definitive entrance into the missionary vocation seems to have taken place in December of 1633 with her mysterious dream vision in which she saw before her the valleys and mountains of a "vast and lonely" country. What the country was, or what her relationship to it was to be, she was not told; this was to be a secret for another three years until in 1636 God Himself revealed His designs: "It is Canada that I have shown you; you must go there and build a home for Jesus and Mary."¹

Thus became more clearly defined the apostolic goal for which God destined her. She had long felt the stirrings of a spiritual apostolate in her soul. Such a spirit was already alive when she had turned from the purely contemplative life of the Carmelites and Feuillantines and begged entrance in the monastery in La Rue de Poitou. She had chosen the Ursulines because "the salvation of souls" was dear to her; and she saw in the Ursuline rule the opportunity to teach others the secrets with which God had already filled her. But with the dream of the unknown land, her apostolic spirit grew so strong that she could not restrain it, and she who had formerly wanted nothing but to bury herself in God now found that when she came to Him it was with children hidden in her arms, clinging to her habit, pulling at her veil—as though she had assumed the motherhood of the souls of all the world:

My body was in our monastery, but my spirit, re-united to that of Jesus, could not remain shut up there. This apostolic spirit carried me in thought to the Indies, to Japan, to America, to the East and to the West, to the most inaccessible northern countries—in short, to every part of the inhabited world where there were rational souls who belong by right to Jesus Christ.²

Three more years were to pass before her dreams and aspirations became a reality. It was not until May of 1639 that Marie, accompanied by her two Ursuline companions, sailed from Dieppe for New France. In the months preceding her departure, her abandonment to the Divine Will was sorely tested. Not only did opposition and misunderstanding overwhelm her, but God tested her interiorly with spiritual trials which, as she wrote, she found far more painful than any suffering inflicted by human beings. Marie was to undertake her apostolic mission stripped of illusions; the sense of glamour, of romance, of adventure

¹ *Vie*. pp. 309-10.

² *Ibid*. p. 301.

which might gild the experience for younger hearts was wrenched away, and instead she saw "crosses without end." It was God Himself who promised her that instead of spiritual consolations she would find only interior desolation; instead of respect and gratitude from those for whom she gave her life, her reward would be coldness and misunderstanding; instead of success she would be fed the bitter fruit of hidden and obscure labour.

And in actual fact such was her life during the thirty years that remained to her. Not indeed that such years were without their joys: her happiness at the first baptism she witnessed at the completion of their new monastery and at the zeal and courage of the religious whom she governed, was inexpressible. There was immense gratitude at the moment when she received word of her son's entrance into the Benedictine Order and his subsequent ordination. There was, as she heard news of the martyrdom of Fathers de Brebeuf and Lalemant, the wistful hope that some day, perhaps, such a grace might also be accorded her. But this grace, so ardently desired, was denied her, and she died in obscurity as God had promised—the simple, peaceful, "ordinary" death of a tired missionary who had become a little lame, a little blind in her work for the salvation of souls.

In speaking of Marie's "mystic evolution" properly so called, one might safely conclude, then, with the year 1627. For close to a decade God had overwhelmed her with extraordinary graces, graces which formed and purified her contemplative soul until it was the perfect instrument of the Divine Will. Yet the instrument is fashioned not for passivity but for action, and following the years of testing came the period when every portion of her delicately fashioned soul and body was employed for God's service. Perhaps nowhere do we find a clearer example of the training of an apostle as well as an illustration of the true apostolic spirit: a spirit which is simply the necessary overflow of the contemplative life. Should we feel that this point is too strongly made; that the suggested dichotomy between Marie's early contemplative life in France and the later apostolic life of Canada does not in actual fact exist, Our Lord's own words will suggest that this is not so. Before Marie's departure for New France, Our Lord spoke to her, warning her of what was before her and concluding with a command which is manifest proof of the point which has been suggested: "Go, and serve Me now

at your own expense; go, and give Me proof of the fidelity which you owe Me in return for the great graces which I have already given you."¹

Her cup had been filled very early in life, but the process of emptying it lasted for over forty years. In 1672 the cup was "empty" at last and as her religious gathered about her deathbed asking for a share in her prayers, she could only murmur, "I have nothing left; it has all been given away."

VALUE OF DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS²—I

By

FREDERICK C. COPLESTON

WHAT KNOWLEDGE is bequeathed to the human race by the great metaphysical systems of the past? One is tempted to answer with Rudolf Carnap, "None at all." The conflict between metaphysical systems, each of which has been presented by its author as the truth, is a commonplace. But it certainly raises doubts about the claims of metaphysicians to provide us with knowledge.

True, Whitehead pointed out that if the history of philosophy is littered with discarded systems, so is the history of science littered with discarded hypotheses. Yet nobody cites this fact against the possibility of scientific knowledge. But though Whitehead raises a point which deserves examination, such examination hardly supports the view that the cases of science and of metaphysics are parallel. It is doubtless true to say that the history of science is littered with discarded hypotheses.

¹ *Vie*, p. 378.

² Imagined reflections of a perplexed philosopher.

Scientists are not infallible. And though the ordinary man is naturally inclined to accept a commonly-held scientific hypothesis on the authority of the scientists (what else can he do?) common agreement does not by itself constitute a proof of the validity of the hypothesis. At the same time it is hardly possible to question the fact that there has been a steady growth in the body of scientific knowledge. Is the body of scientific knowledge at the present day greater than the body of scientific knowledge two or three centuries ago? One cannot sensibly give anything but an affirmative answer. Is the body of metaphysical knowledge at the present day greater than it was in the time of Hegel, or of Leibniz, or of Descartes, or of Aquinas, or of Aristotle? Most people would answer "No" without hesitation. And those who did not wish to content themselves with a negative answer would probably say that the question was improper and involved a misunderstanding of metaphysics. For metaphysics is not the same as science, and we have no right to demand a similar accumulation of knowledge before we are prepared to admit it as legitimate. But if they wish to claim that metaphysics possesses cognitive value, they must be able to point to some instances of metaphysical knowledge, if they wish their claim to be taken seriously. And what are these instances?

Further, though scientific hypotheses can, of course, be mistaken, we know in principle how to decide between rival hypotheses, even if in a given case we are not in a position to do so here and now. But there does not seem to be any way of deciding between rival metaphysical theories. The metaphysician may say "Oh yes, there is; by argument." But then the validity of such arguments is precisely what has been called in question. If it were possible to decide between rival metaphysical theories, some satisfactory way of doing so would surely have come to light after so many centuries of argument and counter-argument.

Yet even if one denies cognitive value to metaphysical systems, one may very well feel that the world would be poorer without them. There is, for instance, something very impressive about the sweep and architecture of absolute idealism as presented by Hegel. And there is poetry in Schelling's view of Nature as slumbering Spirit which awakes to self-consciousness in man, a poetry which could arouse the sympathy of Coleridge.

Poetry. Aesthetic value. Perhaps that is it. The great meta-

physical systems possess an aesthetic rather than a cognitive value; and the world would be poorer without them, just as the world would be poorer without the poems of Shelley, the symphonies of Beethoven, the paintings of Raphael, the Moses of Michelangelo.

"But the metaphysicians never intended to produce works of art. They intended to solve the riddle of the universe, to present us with the truth. Fichte insisted that his system was the science of science, the foundation of all knowledge. Hegel regarded his system as an expression of the self-consciousness of the Absolute."

Yes, of course they meant to present the world with the truth. Of course they believed that their systems possessed cognitive value or, rather, truth value. But does this really matter? That is to say, is it really relevant? The Greek temples were the fruit of belief in the Greek gods. We do not believe in the Greek mythology. Yet this lack of belief does not prevent us from being struck with wonder and admiration as we gaze at the Greek temples of Agrigento, with the Mediterranean behind and the Sicilian sun bringing out the peculiar hue of the stone—the temples which are the perfect shrines for anthropomorphic deities. And is it really necessary to share the faith of the builders to feel the impressiveness of the cathedrals of Chartres, of Amiens, of Bourges, of Canterbury, of Lincoln? Obviously not.

To say therefore that the great metaphysical systems possess no cognitive value is not to deprive them of all value whatsoever; it is not to say that they are worthless. One can perfectly well appreciate Diotima's speech to Socrates in the *Symposium* of Plato without sharing in the belief that there is an absolute beauty and good. One can admire the Hegelian system as a great intellectual *tour de force*, as a marvellous conceptual construction which binds together into a total pattern the different types of human experience. And one can do so without at the same time believing that the Hegelian method of dialectical logic is the appropriate way of gaining knowledge about the world and history. The system is analogous to a great cathedral. The cathedral impresses by its grandeur, its symmetry, its balance, its combination of forces into one harmonious whole. But it can hardly be said to provide us with knowledge.

"But the cathedral is the expression of knowledge, on the part of the architect and the builders. And it tells us something about the people whose faith found expression in it."

Yes, of course. And so is the Hegelian system the expression of knowledge. But this knowledge is, like that of the architect and builders in the case of the cathedral, empirical knowledge. What Hegel cites as facts are not always facts, and his arrangement of the facts is often open to question; but, relatively to his time, he undoubtedly possessed a great deal of empirical and historical knowledge. And it finds expression in his system. But it is irrelevant to the point at issue. The question concerns the metaphysical schema into which this knowledge is fitted. Did Hegel find this schema in reality, or did he impose it on reality, in virtue of preconceived and questionable metaphysical convictions? As for the system telling us something about Hegel himself, it does this in the sense in which any work tells us something about the author. But what does this prove? Shelley's poems doubtless tell us something about Shelley; but this does not alter the fact that they possess aesthetic rather than cognitive value.

Yet it is not merely a question of aesthetic value. For a metaphysical system can often serve as a background for and stimulus to a certain way of life and action. Take the system of Spinoza. This can serve as a background for and stimulus to the overcoming of what he calls the passive emotions or passions, such as hatred, and the cultivation of active emotions, such as a friendly and benevolent attitude towards all men. In Spinoza's opinion at least, if we are once convinced that all actions are determined, we shall cease to feel hatred for anyone. For hatred presupposes that it was in the power of the man who has injured us to have acted otherwise than he did. Again, if we are once convinced that all finite things, including human beings, are modifications of one infinite reality, we shall be led to cultivate a friendly attitude towards them, as an expression of the fundamental ontological unity.

If, however, we take the system of Fichte, we find a set of ideas which tends to promote a more active morality, inspired by a deep sense of duty in terms of one's moral vocation. For in Fichte's metaphysical system we are presented with the picture of an infinite moral will expressing itself in finite selves, each of which possesses its moral vocation. We are not simply modifications of an infinite Substance, as with Spinoza, but rather distinct moments in the life of an infinite free activity. And Nature, so far from being divine, is simply the field for our

moral action, something to be used and moulded and subordinated to the attainment of man's moral ideas. Hence while Spinoza's system tends to foster a more contemplative, resigned, stoical attitude, Fichte's system tends to promote moral activity in the world, an energetic striving after the actualisation of moral ideals.

Even if, therefore, there is no theoretical way of judging between their respective claims to truth, we can perfectly well discriminate between metaphysical systems according to their tendencies to promote this or that type of moral conduct. If we approve of type x and not of type y , we can say, if we like, that system A , which tends to promote x , is truer than system B , which tends to promote y . But in this case "truer" means "more likely to promote a type of conduct of which I approve."

We might, of course, still wish to attribute to B a measure of aesthetic value, even if we disapproved of the type of conduct which it tended to produce or promote. For instance, we might appreciate the philosophy of Nietzsche from the aesthetic point of view, even if we thought it deplorable from the ethical point of view. In other words, we can use both aesthetic and moral criteria in judging between metaphysical systems. But neither set of criteria commits us to believing that metaphysics can increase our factual knowledge of reality.

"This is all very well. But if metaphysical systems can act as backgrounds for or stimuli to different types of moral conduct, and if we can judge between these systems, they must contain theoretical content. Different types of noises might tend to produce different types of reaction in different persons. But it would be absurd to liken metaphysical systems to different types of noises. The only person who could do this would be someone who was so determined to apply a preconceived theory about metaphysics that the plain facts meant little or nothing to him. And the plain fact is that different types of metaphysical systems tend to produce different types of conduct in those who really believe in them because they have different ideal contents, that is, different ideological contents.

"The same conclusion follows from the possibility of applying aesthetic criteria in discriminating between metaphysical systems. For when we say that one system possesses more aesthetic value than another, it is extremely unlikely that we are referring merely

to a superiority in linguistic expression. It may very well be true that Schopenhauer and Nietzsche were better writers than Fichte from the literary point of view. Nietzsche is acknowledged as one of the masters of the German language. But when we say that a system possesses aesthetic value, we probably mean more than this. We demand, for instance, a certain harmony in variety. There must be at any rate no glaring and obvious self-contradiction, such as would make of the picture not one picture but two or more. And the consistency or harmony must not be the result of such poverty of content that disharmony would be scarcely possible. There must be a combination of a variety of elements into one harmonious whole. But the elements in question are not colours and geometrical shapes; they are ideas.

"Hence it is idle to say that metaphysical systems possess no theoretical content. At least it is idle to say this if at the same time we wish to say that we can judge between them. If one system can promote a definite type of conduct and another system can tend to promote another type of conduct, this is because they possess different theoretical or ideal contents which are understandable."

Yes, of course metaphysical systems can possess some theoretical content, if one means by this ideal or ideological content. This is obviously allowed for in the theory of metaphysical systems as expressing different "visions" of the universe.

Aristotle, for example, saw all things as possessing "form," in virtue of which a thing is the kind of thing that it is. In other words, he had a vision of each thing as possessing a structure and of varying degrees of family likeness, specific and generic, between these structures. True, the statement that each thing possesses a structure which makes it the kind of thing that it is does not, in one sense, tell us very much. That is to say, it does not tell us what the structures are. But in the course of time scientists have been able, through the rise and development of the particular sciences, to tell us a great deal about structures, inorganic and organic, from atomic structure up to the structures of higher organisms. And Aristotle's theory can be regarded as a kind of advance programme for this research. Obviously, the scientists did not think of themselves as implementing a programme laid down by Aristotle. But we, looking back, may very well say: "The genius of Aristotle conceived a general sketch or

outline which the scientists of a later era have been engaged in filling in, rendering it definite and concrete."

One might take other examples of this sort of thing. For instance, Spinoza's theory of the feeling of freedom as being due to our ignorance of the determining causes of our choices and actions can be looked on as an invitation to undertake empirical inquiries into the realm of the infraconscious, so far as this is possible. And this view of Spinoza's theory does not necessarily commit us to determinism in advance. For even libertarians must admit the influence on our desires of factors which lie beneath the threshold of consciousness. And analogous remarks might be made about Leibniz' theory of *petites perceptions*.

Then again, there is Dr. Waismann's interpretation of Descartes' view of the material world as a mechanical system. The philosopher's vision of the world as a comprehensible system was given concrete content by Newton and the great classical scientists, who were Descartes' spiritual successors in a much deeper sense than were those who are usually labelled "Cartesians" in histories of philosophy. For the latter missed the illuminating vision and gave themselves to squabbling about metaphysical points.

There is indeed an obvious objection to this particular line of thought. This theory of visions, it may be said, is offered to us as a great improvement on old-fashioned positivism. For instead of being told that metaphysical systems are nonsense we are told that each great system embodies a vision of the universe. And this statement sounds as though high praise were being given to metaphysicians and their systems. We seem, therefore, to be far removed from the Vienna Circle and all its works. We have travelled a long way, and *en route* we have discarded the short-sighted Philistinism of the members of the Circle. But when we come to ask for examples of these visions, we are offered not metaphysical systems as such but excerpts from them. We are offered in fact those excerpts or parts which can, with some plausibility at least, be interpreted as empirical hypotheses. And this procedure is quite compatible with the general position of the positivists in regard to metaphysics. For they were in no way committed to disparaging those parts of the systems of metaphysical philosophers which are capable of being interpreted as empirical hypotheses or as programmes for scientific research.

True, some of the positivists were so concerned with calling metaphysics "nonsense" that they failed to bring out the value of those parts of metaphysical systems, the value of which they could perfectly well recognise, even on their own premisses. And in this sense the theory of visions represents an advance on positivism. At the same time it moves within the orbit of positivism, so to speak, inasmuch as there is no cogent reason why a positivist should not embrace this theory while remaining a positivist.

This objection is obviously a telling one. But is it necessary to narrow down the meaning of the term "vision" to refer only to those parts of metaphysical systems which can plausibly be interpreted as particular empirical hypotheses or programmes for scientific research? Can we not use it to refer to metaphysical systems as wholes; to the total systems of Plotinus, Spinoza, Hegel and so on?

Well, we can, of course. But then the question arises, what do we mean by this?

Let us suppose that we wish to hang on to the conviction that metaphysical systems as such possess no cognitive value; that they do not express knowledge. And let us suppose that we wish at the same time to speak about these systems as embodying so many visions of the universe. We might mean something like this. Hegel, for instance, attempted to work out a unified pattern in terms of which Nature, human history and the various types of human experience could be co-ordinated. And there was no valid reason why he should not make such an attempt. After all, it is perfectly natural to seek after a conceptual mastery of reality as known to us and of the different types of human experience. The search after such conceptual mastery needs no further justification than is needed by theoretical inquiry as such. And the result of Hegel's attempt was an impressive "vision" of the world. At the same time, however, there is no good reason for supposing that the Hegelian logic, which presupposes a certain metaphysical view of reality, is an apt method for arriving at anything which could be called knowledge. Nor is there any very good reason for supposing that one man by himself can achieve the sort of synthesis which Hegel set out to achieve. Indeed, this is precisely one of the troubles with metaphysicians, that each one is over-ambitious and sets out to construct his own comprehensive

synthesis. Surely the only synthesis which could really hope to embody knowledge would be a synthesis resulting from the patient co-operation of scientists. It is doubtless an ideal term, in the sense that it is always in the making, rather than something already made. But we can approximate to it. The total system of Hegel can thus be looked on as a vision of this ideal synthesis. By itself it does not embody knowledge, but it has value as a stimulus to the development of a synthesis by more adequate means than those employed by Hegel. In other words, metaphysical systems possess this great value, that they keep before men's eyes the idea of a general synthesis, and they thus help to prevent our getting lost in particular problems. In this sense the metaphysicians are visionaries. They have the vision of an ideal synthesis. But their several visions look forward, as it were, to the ideal synthesis which will always be in the making and to which we approximate by other than metaphysical instruments.

MARY PORTRAYED—II

By

VINCENT CRONIN

Rococo Madonnas

CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS of Counter-Reformation art—movement, interplay of heaven and earth, theatrical gestures, not to say gesticulation—were carried a stage further in the eighteenth century. Rococo, the name given to the art of this period, means literally “rock-work” and well describes the imitation rock-work, shells, scrolls and foliage which break up the surfaces alike of boudoir commodes and palace façades. On church walls and ceilings, pilasters and pulpits decoration takes the shape of angels, which often seem to set a whole cathedral dancing. This was the age of fêtes, firework displays, opera, fancy-dress balls, light comedies, pastoral poetry:

the age of the wig, its curls suggestive of gaiety, fantasy and airy movement; above all, the age of the mask. "Nothing," the rococo boasts, "must seem to be what it really is." Just as ebony furniture is inlaid with gilt until its ebony qualities disappear, so masked dancers will lose themselves in their masquerade.

The rococo, while accepting much from the baroque, rejected its pomposity. The most prized quality in rococo religious art is airiness—physical lightness. Mary is no longer statuesque and stolid (as, say, in Poussin or Georges de la Tour): she has grown tenuously thin. She is a young girl, seldom a mother. She trips like a gay shepherdess—with polished manners. As never before in art she is ethereal.

Rococo sculptors abandon marble and stone for more malleable materials: limewood and stucco, which can be whipped to a froth like cream. Rococo painters abandon monumental architectural backgrounds; they make much of cumulus clouds, and if a vision is to be depicted, then heaven not earth will dominate the picture. At their best they now abandon paint altogether as being too heavy a ballast for their soaring balloons. Tiepolo, the greatest religious artist of the eighteenth century, turns more and more to drawing. Only a pencil is light enough to do justice to his tripping, delicate figures.

These figures were born at the court of Versailles. Yet France at this period produced little religious painting. Art being concerned with the frivolous, religion was excluded as too serious a subject. Watteau has left many a silken shepherd frolicking, but no shepherds in adoration. In his youth, however, he did achieve a good *Sainte Famille à l'Oiseau*, an engraving of which hangs in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. The background is a rocky garden grotto, such as missionaries had discovered in China; with so much other chinoiserie (hump-backed bridges, pigtailed children, fans) the grotto was then in full vogue. In front of a pool sits Mary, with the Christ-child, legs astride, in her lap. His right hand is raised playfully to a dove. Joseph stands protectively on the left; in the sky hover two playful winged angel-heads.

Watteau's Mary has wide-set eyes and a cupid's-bow mouth. She is *petite* and girlish. Her left foot, sandalled, is stretched out diagonally, to suggest height, and a Tintoretto-like light suffuses her garments: thus creating the required effect of ethereality. As

for the dove, instead of hovering or soaring, as is usual in this context, it flutters, catching up the whole picture on its wings.

But Watteau's Mary is no more than a charming sport. Religious art cannot thrive in an atmosphere of frivolity, and to find a fruitful religious rococo tradition we must turn to Germany or Italy. The stucco work of Giacomo Serpotta (1656-1732) is little known outside his home town of Palermo, yet it ranks among the best art of the age. Serpotta was largely employed to decorate oratorios belonging to the confraternities popular at that time among the nobles of Palermo. The oratorio was small and could therefore be decorated by a single artist in an intimate, well-bred style which, being provincial, lacks sophistication but can nevertheless afford to be sincere.

One of Serpotta's best stuccos, in the Oratorio della Compagnia del Rosario di S. Zita, shows the *Battle of Lepanto*. Each oar of each galley is modelled separately in plaster, giving a lace-work effect. As we might expect, there is no violence or death, no shipwreck or drowning: we seem to be assisting not so much at a battle as at a naval review before the Madonna seated above, whose intercession was believed to have given the Christian fleet its decisive victory over the Turk. The *Battle* is framed by a series of scenes showing mysteries from Mary's life, of which the *Assumption* best exemplifies Serpotta's gift for suggesting spiritual aspiration by means of tall figures and soaring movement. But this is an early stage of rococo: as yet the movement is controlled and the figures are set against a terrestrial background.

Bavaria, with a long tradition of wood-sculpture, took readily to rococo and in Ignaz Günther produced one of its most gifted exponents. Like Serpotta, Günther worked for confraternities and his *Annunciation*, a group of painted wood, was carved for the Brotherhood of the Rose Garland in Weyarn, who carried it in those highly theatrical processions which were such a feature of eighteenth-century religious life. The angel is shown in the act of descending. He is slender of build and his waist, shoulders, arms and legs are bare and smoothly modelled. The left hand is raised, pointing to heaven; the right hand stretched down, originally doubtless holding a lily, which is now lost. Mary half-stands, half-kneels at an inlaid wooden *prie-dieu*, bending in a gesture of humility, while golden rays of light fall from a dove overhead.

This angel is truly an aery figure; his wings are light feathery plumes that curl at the edges with the momentum of flight. As for Mary, her body seems to be poised *above* the *prie-dieu*, which only her drapery touches. Perhaps the sculptor wished to suggest that Mary was already in ecstasy when the angel appeared, or that his appearance and her acceptance have raised her to a superhuman plane. Mary's character and response appear chiefly in the gesture of her long hands, with tapering outstretched fingers. She seems to be quick, sensitive to nuances, highly-bred and also, as taste demanded, somewhat mannered.

Günther's most theatrical work is the group suspended in space above the high altar in Mellersdorf. Against a background of golden rays issuing from a round-faced sun appears the truly stupendous figure of Mary of the Apocalypse: winged like an eagle, crowned and carrying a sceptre. This winged Mary hovers on a cloud supported by putti and leans diagonally to the left. Above and to the right, the archangel Michael battles with an invisible enemy. Rococo figures seem perpetually about to take flight: here at last, with ample theological justification in St. John's *Apocalypse*, Mary actually soars into mid-air.

An even more dramatic flight is recorded by the Venetian master, Tiepolo, in his *Transportation of the Holy House to Loreto*, an event which is said to have occurred in the year 1295. Originally designed as a ceiling, Tiepolo's work shows the small house borne on the backs of angels, while other attendant choirs of angels play lyres and trumpets. Mary, the Christ-child hidden for safety in her cloak, stands on the roof, riding triumphantly. A true rococo Madonna, celestial and soaring.

Among Tiepolo's other Madonnas is a *Vision of the Holy Family*, remarkable for the fact that St. Joseph is holding the Christ-child. Until the early Renaissance Joseph remains a background figure in Marian iconography, but in 1522 a book by the Dominican Isolanus was published in Pavia which did much to foster his cult. St. Teresa called St. Joseph "father of her soul" and dedicated a number of her foundations to him. By Tiepolo's day no less than two hundred Carmelite convents had put themselves under the patronage of a saint who so perfectly exemplified the monastic virtues. Hence the growing importance of St. Joseph in art.

As for the theme of the Holy Family, it had already reached its

artistic apogee in the seventeenth century. "Mary, Jesus and Joseph," writes St. Francis de Sales, "are a Trinity on earth, who as it were represent the Holy Trinity." The text closest to Tiepolo's subject is that of Giovanni Battista de Lectis, who wrote in 1577: "If it is true that St. Simeon was overjoyed to have held the Christ-child once in his arms, what happiness do you think St. Joseph felt, who carried him every day!"

For his Joseph, Tiepolo copies the traditional bald, grandfatherly figure, but it is noteworthy that France and Spain about this time were following the theologian Molanus's advice and depicting Joseph as young and vigorous, able to protect Mary and the child. Despite the growing cult of St. Joseph, it always seems to be Mary who dominates these scenes of the Holy Family. Perhaps we have simply become conditioned to think in terms of Mother and child rather than of Father and child. But certainly in Tiepolo's canvas it is Mary, with her outstretched arms in an attitude of giving, who chiefly commands our attention.

The Mary of Tiepolo's ceilings and set-pieces is a remote, aerial figure belonging more to heaven than earth. To discover her face, as with Poussin, we must turn to Tiepolo's sketches and drawings. There the Venetian's lightness of touch is seen to its best effect. Tiepolo had a predilection for the Oriental cast of face (he sketched a number of Orientals from life), and we find that many of his Madonnas have wide-set rather narrow and slanting eyes, which sets them apart from other Marias of the past.

Tiepolo's *Holy Family with Angels Worshipping the Christ-child* (formerly Orloff Collection, present location unknown¹) is a remarkable drawing which combines ethereal movement and a Mary of oriental features. On either side of the Child a long-plumed angel bows his forehead to the ground in a sublimely graceful gesture of adoration. The figure of Mary is sketched in so lightly, and with such billowing drapery that it is she who seems to soar on the angels' wings. But it is Mary's face which strikes one as so very unusual: as I have said, it is the face of an Oriental girl. Here is the culmination of a period passionately fond of the movement and metamorphosis of masquerade. It was an age when no one had a "real" face, only a succession of ball-masks. "Nothing must seem to be what it really is." And so

¹ Plate 67 in *Drawings of Tiepolo*, by Baron von Hädeln (Pegasus Press, Paris, 1928).

Tiepolo shows us a Mary delighting, for the moment, in playing the part of a young Chinese girl.

What is the psychology behind the rococo Madonnas we have been considering? Uneasiness, I should say: a need to evade reality, to escape altogether from the terrestrial. The baroque religious artist was at home in the world; the rococo religious artist is not. How could he be? On all sides the forces of cynicism and revolution were gathering: devout Catholics banded themselves together in groups apart, over against a pagan century. Serpotta and Günther were associated with sodalities; Tiepolo is known to have been a sodality-member. And yet of course to achieve their evasion, their vision of the aery, glorified body of Mary, all three artists had to employ the style, devices and sometimes the values of their age, for the simple reason that they knew no others. They are first and foremost children of the eighteenth century, even when rebelling against it.

If we compare the rococo with the catacomb Madonnas, perhaps the most striking difference is this: those first paintings of Mary were straightforward (though not of course authentic) portraits of a real woman. From the catacomb walls Mary looks at us directly, face to face. The early Christian artist seems to have been obsessed by the need to show us as clearly as possible a creature of flesh and blood, a woman who actually lived and must not be forgotten. The rococo Mary, on the other hand, would never dream of looking us straight in the eye: her glance is oblique; she is likely to be bending, fluttering or even posing. It is not simply that the artist's vision has changed: his very function has changed. In the eighteenth century who would think of denying that Mary of Nazareth was, if nothing else, an actual historical person, as the majority of Romans might well have denied in the second or third? The danger now is not that Mary will be denied, but that she will be taken for granted, overlooked. And so the artist must constantly put her in a new light, a new posture. He is fighting indifference.

He is also, of course, though to a lesser degree, fighting heresy. The fact of the Reformation partly explains his concern to show a Mary who is heavenly rather than merely human. Hence, for example, his preference for a subject like the Assumption. In the early Church, on the other hand, we do not find controversy over Mary reflected in art until the Council of Ephesus.

Despite these important differences, both the rococo and catacomb Madonnas exhibit a number of features in common, and these features, had we the space to discuss them, would also be found to apply to most other periods of Marian art.

First, the tendency to represent Mary as far as possible in contemporary dress and surroundings. More important than historical accuracy has been the need to feel closely in touch: Mary is present now and as real as when she actually lived in Nazareth. The consciously historical reconstructions of Rossetti in England and Verlat in Holland fail to please precisely because they banish their subject to an inaccessible past. A corollary of this is the rarity of pronouncedly Jewish Marias. Here again, artists have instinctively felt that authenticity would prove a barrier: they are concerned, after all, with the ideal and universal, not with the particular and limited.

A second feature is the absence of any representation of Mary's love for Joseph. In this respect—as in their treatment of Mary's body—artists have shown admirable tact and respect. Only from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries does Joseph play a prominent role in Marian iconography and never does he divert to himself even a part of Mary's love for her Child.

Thirdly, the rarity of any attempts to link Mary with the sea. Even in maritime cities such as Venice portrayals of Mary against large expanses of water are quite exceptional. Yet curling, foam-crested waves, as Botticelli and Raphael knew, are among the most beautiful possible backgrounds. The explanation seems to be that water is a symbol in man's unconscious mind of Eros, irrational, ever-shifting profane love: the precise opposite of the love embodied in Mary.

Finally, the remarkable orthodoxy both in subject-matter and treatment. One has only to turn to Ethiopian illuminated manuscripts to see the disastrous proliferation of legend and absurdity which occurs when a local church is free to develop her art uncontrolled by a central authority. The mainstream of Marian art is orthodox because ninety-nine times out of a hundred it was the Church that commissioned the artist and guided his iconography. Masterpieces of Marian art, such as Leonardo's *Virgin of the Rocks* and La Tour's *Adoration*, were made by the Church no less than by Leonardo and La Tour. The truth of this claim can be seen by comparing such paintings with a work

like Ingres' *La Vierge à la Hostie* in the Louvre, which was commissioned by a secular authority and is hardly more than a jumble of theological nonsense.

Conclusion

While rococo artists whirled in a masked ball that drew them further and further away from real life, Encyclopaedists and revolutionary politicians were already plotting to blow up the palace and, with it, the adjoining church. The steady, almost continuous development of Marian iconography was shattered by the French Revolution into a myriad fragmentary private visions. Partly the decline of religious art in the last two hundred years reflects a decline of faith among the educated classes. But too much can be made of this. More important is the absence of an accepted artistic vocabulary, without which communication of anything but sense impressions becomes virtually impossible. Such a vocabulary can only be built up slowly by groups of artists working under the Church's patronage. There is no reason here for optimism. Patronage requires money, and the Church has too many other calls on her limited funds to be able to pay even for much-needed rudimentary concrete churches, let alone for their adornment.

Christian art has been largely replaced, therefore, by Saint-Sulpice sentimentality, the plaster statues and holy cards coloured like sugared almonds which satisfy popular demand for the pleasantly pretty and reassuring. Popular art! The pink and pale blue plaster statues may have something in common with the more obvious Hellenistic frescoes of the catacombs, when the mass of Christians were poor and dispossessed, but it would be a mistake to speak of the wheel coming full circle. For one thing, today's statues of Mary Immaculate, Purissima, Queen of Heaven generally show Mary without the Child. This is an important new feature of Marian iconography which has its origin in Mary's appearance alone, without Christ, at La Salette, Fatima and, above all, at Lourdes.

What did Bernadette think of these popular images of Our Lady of Lourdes? "My dear Mother—how they slander you! . . . I cannot understand how people make such caricatures when it is a question of Our Lady." "Was she so very beautiful, then?"

Bernadette was asked. "So beautiful that when once one has seen her it is impossible to love anything else on earth."

Bernadette was shown a book of pictures of Mary from various periods, but she could not bear these any more than the nineteenth-century statues. Only the statue of Notre Dame des Eaux at Nevers found favour with her: she said it was "not quite unlike" the actual Mary, whom she had described after her first vision in these words: "The girl was alive, very young and surrounded with light."

But how does one paint light? Bernadette's dissatisfaction with portraits of Mary is no argument against Christian art. She, after all, had seen Mary in the flesh, and so could never be satisfied with hints or symbols. Yet Bernadette's dissatisfaction does point to another question: How can Christian art, and with it Marian iconography, be renewed and revitalised?

One way, perhaps, is by the adoption of traditions, techniques and symbols from the art of missionary countries. To take one example only. The sculpture of Africa and Oceania reveals a monumental simplicity, a sparseness and austerity which could do much to correct the effete, simpering Madonnas we mass-produce in the West, while abstract shapes and colours will be found to elicit a religious mood no less than the representation of grapes or a peacock. Simple lines and simple materials such as wood and bone can convey a mood of humility, while the delicacy of a Chinese painter's line can hint at Mary's reserve and tact more subtly than any Western contemporary artist. Works such as those by Gauguin (*Ia Orana Maria*), Matisse (the Vence chapel Mary) and Moore (*Northampton Madonna and Child*) have sprung not from a retreat to earlier European traditions but by seeking to adapt simpler forms from outside the European tradition.

As formerly there existed a fruitful tension between a strongly intellectual Byzantine iconography and local schools, Celtic, English or French, so now we can hope for cross-fertilisation between Western iconography and the various traditions of missionary countries. Many hybrid productions will doubtless result, but also perhaps new masterpieces.

In any event, mass production of holy medals, prints and plaster statues can never absolve the Christian artist from trying, like the Christian thinker, to penetrate more deeply into the

character of Mary, and portraying her in a way which the age will understand and love. With taste changing more rapidly than ever before the task is one which has to be continually renewed. In the hands of the artist Mary must be reborn through each new generation. Imaginatively, perhaps, but none the less efficaciously. For, after all, a large part of our knowledge and love of Mary depends on the insight of her artists: not only the geniuses but also the anonymous painters of the catacombs, and dreamers like Günther and Tiepolo.

TOLERATION AND THE REFORMATION

By

J. J. DWYER

IN 1953 appeared an English translation of Fr. Lecler's book, *L'Eglise et la Souveraineté de l'Etat* (1946); readers will now welcome a still more important and remarkable work. The Professor at the Institut Catholique de Paris and former editor of *Etudes* brought out in 1955 (at the age of eighty) this monumental study,¹ compacted of the learning of a long life-time, constructed on architectonic lines, which has been justly described as *un livre authentiquement catholique et une étude authentiquement historique*.

Lord Acton's long contemplated "History of Liberty" was never written and thus a great gap was never filled. There was need for a competent survey of the slow and painful growth of toleration in Western Europe during the period when intolerance was acute and the evils of religious conflict and persecution were so bitter and so prolonged. Fr. Lecler's chosen area comprises Germany, Switzerland, Poland, France, the Low Countries, and finally England, where the exigencies of the subject carry him well beyond the end of the sixteenth and almost to the middle of the seventeenth century. Spain and Italy are excluded, because

¹ *Toleration and the Reformation*, by Joseph Lecler, S.J. Translated by T. L. Westow. Vols. I and II (Longmans Vol. I, 50s, Vol. II, 63s).

the Reformation took no root in either country (and because argument would have been of no avail, if it had); Ireland and Scotland, likewise, because they were then virtually outside cultural Europe and made no contribution to that body of literature which the author proposes to examine and interpret.

Each is dealt with in turn. The historical setting has necessarily to be indicated, but Fr. Lecler's concern is with argument and counter-argument, the attempts at pacification or compromise, above all the great landmarks such as the Peace of Augsburg, the Colloquy of Poissy, the Pacification of Ghent, the Edict of Nantes, and always the movement of ideas, the formulation and discussion of the proposals which so slowly changed the climate of opinion from medieval unitary intolerance into the modern recognition of the inevitableness of diversity. The study of all that literature has been a large part of the life-work of the author. The learning is enormous, but balance, proportion and lucidity are equally evident. Fr. Lecler never dwells too long on the work of any of the controversialists, however forcible the arguments, however influential the treatise or pamphlet, so that the reader is carried on along a broadening stream where clarity and charity are as conspicuous as the judgment and the erudition.

A great structure needs wide and firm foundations; one-third of the first volume is devoted to the preliminary data, the famous texts of Scripture (*converte gladium tuum in locum suum . . .*, the reply to the sons of Zebedee, the Parable of the Tares, and so on); the Church in the Roman Empire, the attitude of Medieval Christendom to the Jews and to Islam. Then such dicta as *credere non potest homo nisi volens* and (later on) *Compelle intrare* (St. Augustine), and the opinions of St. Bernard and of St. Thomas Aquinas. For the views of the Christian humanists at the eve of the Reformation there is a special chapter: Nicholas of Cusa, Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, St. Thomas More and especially Erasmus. Cusanus said roundly: "the nature of Christianity excludes all compulsion"; Erasmus: "it is better to cure a sick man than to kill him," and again: "Our Lord used neither syllogisms nor threats nor thunderbolts." Erasmus looked upon toleration as a preliminary to the restoration of unity and could not, of course, foresee the co-existence *as a norm* of antagonistic religions in a more or less laicised State. While he was right in holding that the threatened break-up of Christendom

could not be averted or mended by the use of force, he was wrong in thinking that the progressive restriction of the respective dogmatic positions was the remedy. He was met, too, by people who greatly preferred the view of St. Jerome: "Arius in Alexandria was but a spark, but because it was not put out at once its fire spread over the whole world." A whole section is devoted to Erasmus because of the great place that he occupies in the history of Toleration. "He was," says Fr. Lecler, "the first to suggest the idea of civil tolerance for Protestant worship, at least as a temporary solution." When the great gulf opened and widened Erasmus had followers and disciples on either side; and again on the one side there was a majority whose outlook was medieval and scholastic, on the other a majority who by instinct looked for precepts and precedents in the pages of the Old Testament.

Luther in the first instance denied that Princes had any right to intervene in religious matters because he knew that the Emperor would be against him; but when he found that the Elector of Saxony and other magnates would support him he at once accorded them the right he had denied to the Catholic Princes. He was broadminded, too, about the Anabaptists because they had adopted his precept of interpreting Scripture for themselves, but when they revealed themselves as anarchists and polygamists, he advocated persecution to the death, using exactly the same arguments that had served for the suppression of the Albigenses. Actually those revolutionaries received very similar treatment in every country. Later on, when Luther's powers of persuasion had diminished, he discovered that "the Christian Prince" had repressive powers against "false worship" and heretical teaching and had the right to oblige all his subjects to hearken to the official doctrine. Bucer and Melancthon agreed that there was a clear duty to suppress "idolatry" and "blasphemy," *i.e.*, to abolish the Mass and put obstinate Catholics to death. Sprangenburg, a Lutheran, proclaimed that the Prince can rightly compel his subjects to hear the word of God; Wolfgang Capito, that he must use that power with all severity. That was why Henry VIII in England had legitimately declared himself Head of the Church—it was what Christ wished. Bucer, moreover, explained that this was not compulsion or violence, it was simply giving them the opportunity of hearing the truth. The method was

called *Cura Religionis*. Next was evolved the *Jus Reformandi*: (1) to put to death the obstinate "heretic"; (2) to banish the troublesome fanatic; (3) to coerce by milder methods those who were likely to yield obedience and so bring them round—that, incidentally, was the avowed policy of William Cecil in the first years of Elizabeth's reign. All this time there was much talk about Constantine, Theodosius, Justinian, and Charlemagne. Julian the Apostate was instanced as having tried to ruin Christianity by means of freedom of worship; that was in reply to Schorr, who had maintained that the Prince had no right to suppress the Mass by force. Witzel and Cassander, Catholic Erasmians, took up later the position of St. Augustine that there should be no capital punishment or severities, but moderate restraint put upon heretical propaganda. At Strasbourg, a cross-roads of Protestantism and rendezvous for all sects and all opinions, both Luther and Zwingli were denounced by Jacob Storm who was at a safe distance from both of them. One is reminded of Enobarbus, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

... I do perceive men's judgments are
A parcel of their fortunes. ...

At the Peace of Augsburg (1555) the proposition of the two Electors, Palatine and Brandenburg, that in each State subjects should be left to choose their religion was limited to Catholicism and Lutheranism; both Zwinglianism and Calvinism were excluded. But the process of making Germany a mosaic of Catholic and Protestant principalities had been started and when some of the Princes became Calvinists they proceeded to adopt the *Jus Reformandi* in their dominions. So diets and colloquies came to naught and the Catholic rulers, finding that toleration was claimed for Protestants in their States and refused to Catholics elsewhere, stood on the ancient rule that each had to sustain the ancient faith on his own soil, *Ubi unus dominus, ibi sit una religio*. By the force of events this led directly to *Cujus regio, ejus religio*.

All the time there was a veritable war carried on by the scribes and scholars; treatises and pamphlets were simply projectiles. Argument or quotation was handled scholastically, but all admissions and distinctions were made with an eye on concrete cases. Much was made of the case of John Hus, put to death at Constance despite the Emperor's safe-conduct. The Reformers

declared that that was the perfect instance of *haereticis non est servanda fides* and were not impressed by the reply, taken from St. Thomas Aquinas, that while man is free to accept the faith he is not free, once it is accepted, to abandon it.

That unfortunate attempt at compromise made by Charles V, the Interim of 1548, had pleased nobody because, like Henry VIII's Ten Articles, it dropped some doctrines and was vague about others. Maximilian II (1564-76) had no better fortune. His two main points, clerical marriage and communion in both kinds, merely earned him the reputation of being half a Lutheran. From Pius IV, who was all for *via caritatis et mansuetudinis*, he obtained the latter but not, of course, the former; and the concession was soon withdrawn by Pius V. But, in any case, no compromise was possible by that time; the clear definitions of Trent, the progress of the Counter-Reformation and the strength of Calvinism had made all such efforts meaningless.

In Switzerland a kind of stability had been reached on the *cujus regio* basis but with no religious freedom anywhere: it was a case of Catholic cantons or Protestant cantons. A strongly Erastian character had been imparted by Zwingli, who taught that ecclesiastical jurisdiction should be exercised by the magistrates—his equivalent of Luther's "godly Prince." In the second half of the century, however, Solothurn and other cantons were recovered for the Church by the Jesuits and the Capuchins.

One of the most influential books ever written was Calvin's *Institutes*, the bible of Presbyterianism. He would have none of Zwingli's system; he devised a cast-iron theocracy of his own. By his genius for organisation, he created with the aid of another Frenchman, Farel, the Calvinist State as a thing virtually identical with the Calvinist Church and Geneva became what Moscow is now, an international centre of propaganda and control. His followers despised the Lutherans as "half-papists" and were repaid with a full measure of hatred. As late as 1620 one Lutheran writer asserted that they had more common ground with the Catholics than with "the Satanic brood of Calvin" who had everywhere surpassed the Lutherans by their energy, intensity and cohesion. Long before the end of the sixteenth century they had in every country become a State within the State. "While they were in a minority," says Fr. Lecler, "they were charitable and peace-loving, but once they held the whip-hand they became

extremely intolerant." That is a remarkable under-statement. No such tyranny, social as well as dogmatic, has ever been exercised anywhere as in those places where a Calvinist consistory was in control.

One of the great pioneers of Toleration was Sebastian Castellion, (d. 1563), a French Protestant who had joined Calvin at Strasbourg but who, like Clément Marot, had soon had enough of him. He attacked Calvin over the cruel fate of Servetus in *De haereticis, an sint persequendi?*, a collection of carefully chosen texts on tolerance. True Christianity, he urged, consisted in purity of moral life not in the excessive pursuit of orthodoxy. Like Erasmus, he insisted on the meekness and charity shown by Our Lord; like others, he dwelt on the Parable of the Tares. Cruelties such as those inflicted on Servetus came from the instigation of Satan. Denial of the basic truths of religion should be met by excommunication or banishment, nothing more. A shrewd hit at Calvin was that the latter preferred Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 3: 96) to Gamaliel. He drove Calvin into the position of not being entitled to condemn the Inquisition, a stinging attack when it is remembered that Calvin had (through the hand of another) actually delated Servetus to the Inquisition in France earlier in that same year 1553. Castellion repeated the attack and again struck at Beza in *De haereticis a civili magistratu non puniendis*. In his final treatise, *De arte dubitandi et confitendi, ignorandi et sciendi*, which was, as one would expect, more general and abstract, he denied the Reformer's dogma of the absolute and exclusive authority of Scripture and actually coined the striking phrase that Reason is the daughter of God. More effective still were his books destined for France, the *Traité des hérétiques* and the *Conseil à France désolée*. In the year of his death, 1563, there came other notable contributions to the discussion. The heresiarch Ochino (1487-1565) published at Basle a work entitled *Thirty Dialogues*. In one of these, No. 28, the speakers are none other than Pius IV and Cardinal Morone. Ochino here makes Morone follow Castellion and divide cases of heresy into three categories, minor errors, errors on serious points *per incuriam*, obstinate denial of essential truths; but even in the third case Morone is made to take the merciful view. More influential was the short book of an Italian refugee from Trent, Jacobus Acontius, *Satanae Stratagemata* (1565), soon translated into French as *Les Ruzes de*

Satan. Acontius urged that nobody should be condemned on secondary points: "what did the Good Thief know? Yet he was saved, or Magdalen?, or the eunuch baptised by Philip?" Acontius had more understanding of Christian unity and a greater sense of the need for the triumph of truth than Castellion; basically he was for freedom of conscience.

In one field, then, and in one only, did the Reformation bring freedom. It freed the State from all restraint by making it the authority in religion. The outcome of all the searching of the Scriptures, of "le délire biblique," was "Divine Right," National State Churches, Absolutism. Men who imagined that they were going to have the Gospel found that they had Lutheranism, Zwinglianism, Calvinism or Anglicanism. To be a Socinian or any kind of anti-Trinitarian was for a long time mortally dangerous everywhere except in Poland.

The real solution, the disentangling of religious from political unity, was found in France, but it is a curious fact that the region where freedom of worship first took a practical shape was the most unlikely one. Towards the end of the century Poland had become the general refuge of all manner of heretics so that the predominance of any sect was impossible. Thus, when in 1573 Henri de Valois, Duke of Anjou, was elected King, freedom of worship was one of the conditions. He left next year to become Henri III of France and was succeeded by Stephen Bathory, an ardent Catholic. Early in the seventeenth century came the unexpected, a better use of the *Jus Reformandi* than had hitherto been imagined and in Prussia, of all places. In 1611 Sigismund III, a Lutheran, granted Johann Sigismund, the Elector of Brandenburg, the duchy of Prussia in fief on condition that he, as Elector, would allow the Catholics of the duchy the same freedom of religion as the Calvinists and Lutherans.

via prima salutis

Quod minime reris, Graia pandetur ab urbe.

Before this remarkable event freedom of worship had been granted in 1609 by the Emperor Rudolf II for the Kingdom of Bohemia where the Catholics were a minority. There was also freedom of goods and revenues. It was more liberal than the Peace of Augsburg, more rational than the Edict of Nantes; but it was short-lived. It perished in the storms that soon produced

the Thirty Years War. Only a strong and vigilant government could have ensured the success of the experiment.

Very interesting was the contribution of the Dutch Jesuit theologian, Martin Becanus, in a tract entitled *De fide haereticis servanda* (1608). He allows that obstinate heretics should be put to death, but is less severe than Bellarmine on the practical question of allowing heretics to live in the dominions of a Catholic Prince. He grants three exceptions: (1) where heretics are very numerous and too deeply involved to be affected by the use of force; (2) where more good can be achieved by gentler means and (3) where tolerance means the avoidance of greater evils. This, says Fr. Lecler, is plainly no allowance of Toleration in principle but a series of concessions to expediency. Nevertheless, as confessor to Ferdinand II, Becanus undoubtedly exercised influence in the direction of toleration.

"The Catholic Kingdoms of France and Poland," says Fr. Lecler, "were the first to try out legal tolerance for Protestant denominations"—a fact not generally known. At the date of Henri III's accession (1574) no Protestant prince in Europe had shown toleration for Catholics. The Wars of Religion in France proved that the Huguenots could not be put down by sheer force. "*Une foi, une loi, un roi*" could no longer be maintained. But the *Politiques* who found the solution had to wait thirty years before the solution was adopted. The famous Colloquy of Poissy, where Lainez reminded Catherine de Medici that it was not the business of politicians to settle doctrinal issues, showed that compromise on doctrine was hopeless. Conflicting interests are sometimes reconciled, conflicting passions, never. An enormous polemical literature accompanied the struggle. Its first effect was to pour oil on the flames but the long-term result was to prove that the deepest problem of the age was not to be solved by the arguments of divines or bookmen. In the meantime, the *Politiques* were not applauded by the fervent partisans or credited with sufficient concern for Religion. "*Le nom de Politique*," we read in the memoirs of Tavannes, "*a été inventé pour ceux qui préfèrent le repos du royaume ou de leur particulier au salut de leur âme et à la religion, qui aiment mieux que le royaume demeure en paix sans Dieu qu'en guerre pour lui.*" They gained influence, however, as it became increasingly evident that the Huguenots were capable of maintaining themselves on some-

thing like equal terms; and after 1584 the entry of the League served to bring matters to a head.

Castellion's counsel to his countrymen was not to force people's consciences. Duplessis-Mornay was for freedom of worship for both sides "until the assembly of a Council." He maintained that compulsion produced hypocrisy or atheism, advising that religious divisions should be left to persist, hoping to bring Christians together on the level of civil relationship, which was really a sounder and more practical approach than the Erasmian ideas of Castellion.

The Low Countries endured a long and bitter struggle and there the remedy had to be partition. After a great deal of slaughter and destruction the southern provinces learnt by experience that the Spanish yoke was more endurable than that of the Calvinists and that all the argument and controversy was merely rationalisation of the material situation; and the Dutch, in the north, were the first to realise that even sporadic hostilities were very bad for business. There was, nevertheless, the usual output of literature. The greatest champion of religious freedom was Dirck Coornhert (1522-90), a layman, a scholar, and what would be called in modern times a liberal Catholic. He knew all about Luther and Zwingli, Calvin and Beza, and insisted that the execution of heretics as such was unlawful. He was followed by Caspar Cool (1536-1615), who placed great emphasis on Knowledge of Scripture and who, like all the humanists, could not stand the doctrines of Geneva, and by two far more famous writers, Arminius (1550-1609) and the illustrious Hugo Grotius who was called in as an umpire. Grotius' conclusions are well known.

The last portion of this great study deals with England from 1534 to 1640, and is as well done as all the rest. Here Fr. Lecler follows Mgr. Philip Hughes, the Abbé G. Constant, Dr. Gordon Albion, and in short all the best work in this field. He points out, among many other things, that "England applied capital punishment for denominational causes longer than any other State that was divided by the Reformation," but made up (as he puts it) for lost time afterwards. As to the root of the matter, he is quite clear: "the Reformation in England was the work of uncompromising Erastianism."

What, then, are the conclusions? That "the spirit of the Gospel

supersedes the violent methods of the Old Law; that compulsion used against conscience is futile and that repression when attempted against great numbers only induced bloodshed; that the 'secular arm' could produce nothing but conflict and evil, while the collusion of Church and State could work against the Church itself." It was therefore indicated for the Church to change its methods and to recall the purity of its original conduct; and finally that "those great controversies of the century of the Reformation deserve the attention of all Christians today."

This large and learned book is admirably translated and most carefully produced. In an immense mass of detail there is hardly any noticeable slip. In Vol. I, (p. 387) "*ecclesia sabaudica*" should be "the church in Savoy," not Swabia; and in Vol. II (p. 492) the date "1553" should be 1563 which involves a consequent alteration. But such tiny specks will do nothing to diminish the admiration with which every informed reader will regard this truly striking achievement.

THE MISSION OF GAIETY

Henry Harland: 1861-1905

HENRY HARLAND, the centenary of whose birth occurs this year, is remembered chiefly for his two light novels *The Cardinal's Snuffbox* and *My Friend Prospero*, which were last reprinted, in Penguin Books, in 1946 and 1947. Harland, as the author of light-comedy fiction of this kind, and as the editor of *The Yellow Book*, has his place as a bright star in the galaxy of late-Victorian aesthetes; it is unfair to dismiss him, as is so often done, as just one of the pretty and precious talents of Bohemia. Like John Oliver Hobbes (Mrs. Craigie), another Catholic novelist of this period, he made use of flippancy and an agile wit in the presentation of religious themes.

Harland was born of American parents, probably at St. Petersburg (now called Leningrad), though this may have been one of the many fantasies he wove about himself. He was certainly of American parentage, and at the age of twenty-four he married Aline Merriam, a beautiful girl, half American and half French, of whom he has left a very attractive portrait in his autobiographical novel *Grandison Mather* (1890). In the same year, after a trip to Europe, the Harlands settled in London.

During his earlier years in America Harland had developed strong sympathies with Jewish life and thought. Under the pseudonym of Sidney Luska he wrote several lurid, sensational, and extremely popular novels of New York Jewry, dealing especially with the life of the city's poorer Jewish population. The best-known of these was *The Yoke of the Torah*. These stories Harland produced with dedicated regularity, rising at 2 a.m. daily and writing until breakfast time, fortified by wet towels and black coffee, before going to the office where he worked as a clerk.

After settling in London Harland gave up all interest in Jewish and American themes and dismissed "Sidney Luska" as a bad dream. In 1894 he became editor of John Lane's famous periodical *The Yellow Book*, with Aubrey Beardsley as art editor. Previously, in 1890 and 1891, he had written two novels in a new vein, more exotic and less realistic, *Two Women or One?* and *Mea Culpa: A Woman's Last Word*. He made friends with Henry James, Edmund Gosse, and other influential men of letters and began to cultivate an elegant and highly polished prose style. He also established himself as a leading Bohemian. He spent much time in Paris where he was an *habitué* of the cafés of the Latin Quarter, sported a goatee beard, and developed a gesticulatory mode of conversation that made him appear more French than the French. He wore his hair longer than did any of his friends on either side of the Channel, and circulated absurd stories about his cosmopolitan life and connections, claiming, among other fantasies, to have studied for the priesthood in Rome and to be heir to an English baronetcy.

A *poseur* he certainly was at this time, but in spite of a reputation as a cynical sophisticate and "wicked" aesthete, there was no malice in him. "Real sin shocked him," one of his critics wrote, and his delightful stories in *The Yellow Book* (1894-1897) are entirely free from any morbid taint.

Unfortunately, no memoir or biography of Harland has been written, and we have no details of his conversion to Catholicism, in which the influence of his wife probably had some part. One fruit of his conversion was the best-selling novel *The Cardinal's Snuffbox*, which describes how a young Englishman in Italy comes to the Catholic faith, helped by a Cardinal, "a heavenly old man," and a gloriously beautiful young Duchess. This light-hearted romantic story, full of wit and gaiety and sunny, happy scenes of Italian life, was a new type of conversion novel and caught the public's fancy at a time when interest in Catholicism was becoming fashionable and the French and Italian cultures were exciting Anglo-Saxon admiration. The book was enormously popular both in England and America, and the *New York Catholic World* reported that it had been the cause of several conversions.

Encouraged by this success Harland wrote three more novels, all similar in style and theme: *The Lady Paramount* (1902), *My Friend Prospero* (1904) and *The Royal End*, published posthumously in 1909. Here again we find romance under Italian skies amidst enchanting landscapes, with radiant aristocratic heroines and wise and angelic old priests. Catholicism is seen in the books from its gayest and brightest aspects. Harland seems to have been quite untouched by the more sober, authoritarian side of post-Tridentine Latin Catholicism, which some converts found hard to understand.

A critic in the *American Sewanee Review* during 1904 remarked of *The Cardinal's Snuffbox*, *The Lady Paramount* and *Prospero*, that "The three have the same plot, the same situations, and almost the same characters," and went on to say that "All this is very clever and Harlandesque, and yet there is something a trifle wearisome in the 'damnable iteration' of these preciousities of style. . . . Mr. Harland is never willing to descend to the ordinary commerce of thought—the speech of daily life. He is mortally afraid of the commonplace. He has not yet learned the difficult lesson that 'the fear of the commonplace is by no means the beginning of wisdom.'"

Verbal surprise was a speciality of writers in the 'nineties, who preceded Edith Sitwell in the art of transposing one set of ideas to another. One example of this from among many in Henry Harland's work is his description of a young person "who took to rouge and powder, and introduced falsetto notes into her toilet."

Harland accepted from Frederick Rolfe, Baron Corvo, the first six of his famous *Stories Toto Told Me* for publication in *The Yellow Book*. Corvo was treated with respect by Harland and his circle, and as A. J. A. Symons says in *The Quest for Corvo*, "The editor of *The Yellow Book* and his friends were fascinated by the equivocal Baron, an impressively shabby figure at the Saturday tea-parties in the Cromwell Road." Corvo's translation, "in diaphotick verse," of Omar Khayyam, was undertaken at the joint suggestion of Henry Harland and Kenneth Grahame. Corvo's relations with Harland ended on the usual discordant note; yet when the Baron's extraordinary book, *Chronicles of the House of Borgia*, appeared, Harland was generous enough to write to its author saying, "Your Borgia book is GREAT. . . . In any land save England, such a book would make its author at once famous and rich."

Harland's claim, "I know my Italy well. I know it better than the Italians themselves do," can hardly have been congenial to Corvo, and it is not surprising to find that in his novel, *Nicholas Crabbe: or The One and the Many*, he gives us a decidedly caustic sketch of Harland under the name of Sidney Thorah. Sidney Thorah, he says,

was a lank round-shouldered bony unhealthy personage, much given to crossing his legs when seated and to twisting nervously in his chair. He had insincere eyes, . . . he spoke a great deal, in eager tones inlaid with a composite jargon which was basically Judisch but varied with the gibberish of the newly-arrived American students of the Latin quarter. . . . His conversation was amazingly witty, pleasant, ephemeral, and insincere. Under a pseudonym he had published several Judisch novels written in a masterly caricature of a Judisch dialect. That was before his avatar on the south (or only) side of the Park. Of later years, under his own name, he had become an expert writer of short stories—expert, because his work bristled with solecisms. . . . Crabbe noted that (apart from his core-known Jews) he had only one set of characters and only one plot in his whole literary equipment.

Allowing for its hostile bias, this criticism is not without shrewdness.

Ella D'Arcy, the assistant-editor of *The Yellow Book*, says that "Harland was the most brilliant, witty and amusing of talkers, the sweetest-tempered of companions." Richard Le Gallienne, in *The Romantic Nineties*, describes Harland as

one of those Americans in love with Paris who seem more French than the French themselves, a slim, gesticulating, goateed, snub-nosed lovable figure, smoking innumerable cigarettes as he galvanically pranced about the room, excitedly propounding the *dernier mot* on the build of the short story or the art of prose. . . . The polishing of his prose was for him his being's end and aim, and I have often seen him at that sacred task of a forenoon, in his study-bedroom, still in pyjamas and dressing-gown, with a coffee-pot on the hearth, bending over an exquisite piece of hand-writing, like a goldsmith at his bench.

There are certain writers who, though they are mentioned in studies of their literary period, are dismissed as a matter of routine as minor and of little or no account. An instance in the Restoration period is Thomas Shadwell, who is remembered solely as the subject of some of Dryden's most biting lines. Yet a more delightful comedy than Shadwell's *The Sullen Lovers* it would be hard to find. Similarly, some of Harland's works are found to give unexpected pleasure, and Catholic publishers of paperbacks might do worse in this centenary year than reprint some of his novels. These charming and polished stories, slight though they may be, would surely not lack readers.

Harland died in 1905, at the early age of forty-four, at San Remo. His reputation as a writer has since suffered a rapid eclipse; today, when so much literature inclines towards sordid realism and social

indignation, the modern reader may tend to dismiss his fiction as superficial, dated, and escapist. But the wit, the vivacity, and the outstanding *joie-de-vivre* are still bright and charming. "He had a grand compassionate heart, and faith in the high mission of gaiety," wrote a friend. It is particularly pleasant today to enjoy the books which reflect Harland's belief that "the world is always romantic if you have the three gifts needful to make it so—faith, the sense of beauty and the sense of humour."

MARGARET M. MAISON and BROCARD SEWELL

REVIEWS

ENCOUNTER OF RELIGIONS

An American Dialogue: A Protestant looks at Catholicism and a Catholic looks at Protestantism, by Robert McAfee and Gustave Weigel, S.J. Foreword by Will Herberg (Doubleday \$2.95.)

The Encounter of Religions: A Dialogue between the West and the Orient, by J.-A. Cuttat; Foreword by Dietrich von Hildebrand. Translated by Pierre de Fontnouvelle and Evis McGrew (Desclée 130 frb).

NEITHER OF THESE extremely interesting books is what we mean by a Dialogue, or what Plato would have meant. The former consists of two essays put side by side. The latter is a very careful study by a Westerner of eastern beliefs, including an essay on Hesychasm, a system of mysticism, and on "The Prayer of the Heart" which was developed on Mount Athos: "Hesukhia" means "quiet."

A certain effort is needed if we compare the situation in the United States with our own. Here, the word "Protestant" is seldom used, and once more what it really means is being disputed. It occurs once only in an official Church of England document—the Coronation service—and is followed by a reminder that the Sovereign is to defend the "Catholic" faith. On the whole, it designates all Christian denominations other than "Orthodox" or "Roman." But we doubt whether in England the matter is considered often in terms of power. Yet we observe that the United States are in a sense more free than we. Here the Sovereign cannot be a Catholic. The President, we now discover, can, though he had to insist that he would not take orders from Rome. But Mr. McAfee shows that Catholic bishops can give orders to their own flock which have far-reaching material consequences. Thus, a bishop bans a book; Catholic magazines will naturally ban it too; but if a non-Catholic magazine continues to advertise it, Catholics may be forbidden to write or advertise in that

magazine. So, lest revenue should sink, it will not dare to advertise, but will feel it has been crowded out by the Catholics—and what might not happen if they grew numerically predominant? Both writers, I think, doubt whether this will ever happen. If the United States cannot be called a Protestant country, neither is it likely to become a Catholic one. On the whole it will remain tripartite, divided between Catholics, Protestants and the rest, of whom Jews form a large part. Hence mutual courtesy should prevail: it will be realised that sarcasm, rancour and the like are not only unchristian but produce no good results, even civically. And yet the question recurs: "Won't politeness-all-round lead to indifference?" Fr. Weigel, I think, fears a kind of interior secularisation of Christians due to the worship of money (and would to God we could keep money out of religious affairs), and due to that ambition for even local political power which leads too often, we are told, to such disgusting corruption. Both writers hope for a greater interiorisation of religion, and Mr. McAfee regards these two essays as at least the "beginning of a conversation"—for, so far, each is sure to want constantly to interrupt the other! Two fundamental differences, however, cannot but remain: Protestantism is not one thing: the *Res Catholica* is; and the latter is bound to proselytise, wishing to see all men "even as I am," with or without chains!

Interiorisation is a word making a link between two seemingly quite disparate books, but a word about which we have to be very careful. Dr. Cuttat distinguishes two groups of religious—the truly oriental, Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism; and Judaism, Christianity and Islam, all of which demand, at their highest, an interiorisation. How should one approach the study of these diverse phenomena? I seem to remember a painting by Watts showing a vague, exalted, calm personage, committed to no creed but "contemplating all," a very conceited and Victorian idea! I think, too, that noble pagan Symmachus quieted his soul when the statue of Victory was removed by the Christians from the Senate-house, by reflecting that "not by one road alone does man approach so great a Mystery." This is exactly what Dr. Radhakrishnan said and what Mr. Arnold Toynbee apparently thinks in *Christianity among the Religions of the World*, that the religion of the future will be a sort of fusion, or synthesis, with one of the Hindu traditions. Unfortunately, they think, Christianity has inherited the Hebrew belief in a "jealous" (exclusive) God; holds to Christ as the Sole-begotten; and to a truth "once and for all delivered to the saints" (i.e., to an "elect" minority). Hence the disastrous idea of the people in Judaism (and of the Faith in an undiluted Islam), and of the Church among Christians. Dr. Cuttat rejects this non-committed attitude, which, for a convinced Christian, cannot but be a pretence,

but asks for an ever deeper interiorised understanding of what his Faith is. Then he will be able to advance towards examining other minds in the Orient with both intelligence and charity. We have not always, perhaps seldom, provided either of these. He delves into what is meant by certain words such as love, sin and incarnation, which Western writers may use when translating what oriental philosophers say. We find that East and West do in fact mean radically different things. When we speak of interiorisation, we mean reaching something more than, say, exteriorly correct behaviour. This more "real" self is destined, by way of union with God really incarnate in no illusory Man, to be united supernaturally with the real personal God. For the East, interiorisation would mean the progressive getting rid of husk after husk of illusion, till at last individuality itself is not purified, but abolished. Keble's hymn, "Till in the ocean of Thy love—We lose ourselves in heaven above," was an unconscious approximation to Hindu-Buddhism, save that Keble believed in a real Lover who really loved each real created Self. Part II of this remarkable book, of which each chapter is like the first part enriched by very illuminating texts, deals with Hesychasm, a system which forms a link between East and West and has a pedigree reaching back to the Eastern Fathers. It would be impossible to examine it adequately here, especially as East and West approach the doctrine of the supernatural in different ways. Meanwhile, we would ask if the origin of the once popular English prayer, the Jesus Psalter, with its manifold repetition of the Name of Jesus, is known? For just such a repetition forms part of the Hesychast preparation to the interiorised "Prayer of the Heart."

C. C. MARTINDALE

ENGLISH CONTEMPLATIVES

The English Mystical Tradition, by David Knowles (Burns and Oates 25s).

FEW SUBJECTS lend themselves so readily to worthless writing as that of mysticism. To evade the peril even in part is an achievement; to avoid it wholly is a triumph. Professor Knowles's victory is unqualified. Within a relatively small compass the author of *The English Mystical Tradition* examines and places (definitively, one is inclined to think), the writings of the fourteenth-century English mystics; he also expounds the nature of Catholic mysticism, traces the evolution of Catholic mystical theology, depicts the English scene against which the mystics lived out their lives; and rounds off with an analysis of the doctrine of Father Baker, to whom so much credit is due for the preservation and presentation of their works.

Professor Knowles writes as "a Catholic Christian" whose concern

is primarily with the mystics as mystics. Three of the ten chapters of his book are devoted to preliminaries, six to the *personae*, and the concluding chapter to an epilogue.

In expounding the theology of mysticism the author takes his stand with the theologians on the basic doctrines of "the transcendent immanence of God and the divine sonship given us by Christ." The mystics are the chosen ones who "are capable of receiving not only the gift of faith and the power to love and serve God, but a new supernatural knowledge and love, the beginnings of God's own knowledge of Himself and love of Himself which is the life of the Blessed Trinity and of the Blessed in heaven." In them grace not only co-operates with their own human efforts, it "operates itself directly in the powers which receive with free consent." Of the supreme degrees of this way of life "it may truly be said that when the hand of God through Christ is thus upon them [the mystics] they know and love with God's own knowledge and love."

Though he does not enter into the controversy as to how far the direct perception of God by the soul is integral to the mystical state properly so called, a later remark of the writer suggests that he considers such awareness an essential element of mystical prayer: "The truly mystical initial prayer is distinguished . . . by an awareness of a love and knowledge and 'presence' of God that does not proceed from any thought or conscious motive but is in the soul without any previous activity of the faculties." On the equally controverted question, "May, or should, all Christians aspire to this life?" Professor Knowles is, however, more explicit: "When all has been said, there is something in us that recoils from at least the more extreme forms of the teaching of the universal invitation to the mystical life"; his considered position approximates to that of the late Abbot Butler: "that there is much to be said for the view that there are not one, nor two, 'unitive ways,' but many, just as there are many mansions in our Father's house." Hence, Professor Knowles allows himself a mild warning against the tendency of some present-day spiritual writers "to lower unduly the threshold of contemplation. . . . This real birth of the mystical life, rare but real, must not be confused or blurred by identification with a mere facility for prayer or an inability to make set meditations."

Chapter II is perhaps one of the most impressive in the book. From the vantage-point of the professional historian the author surveys and maps out the evolution of Catholic Mystical Theology. Without undue simplification, and without sacrificing clarity to brevity he isolates and evaluates the various influences, ranging from Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus to Eckhardt and Tauler, whose convergence or fusion provided the complex spiritual *milieu* of the fourteenth-century

"devout soul." By the beginning of that century "two streams of doctrine were at least potentially available for trained minds . . . the Augustinian scheme, formalised by the Victorines, in which contemplation was a half-intellectual, half-devotional, grace-enlightened presentation of Christian truth, the normal, if somewhat uncommon, result of long ascetic and mental preparation," and "the scheme of the German Dominican masters, based chiefly on Christianised Neoplatonist teaching, in which contemplation, the fully mystical contemplation of God in darkness, was accompanied by a new, infused love and knowledge, real but incommunicable." In addition to both these schools "there lay, in the concrete individual case the age-old, traditional, practical instruction on the ascetic life and the life of prayer that had become explicit among the Fathers of the desert and had remained current throughout the ages."

Before proceeding to show how these three currents of influence affect the mystics themselves Professor Knowles glances at the social, intellectual, and religious condition of fourteenth-century England, unobtrusively correcting misconceptions and adjusting our focus as he does so. There follows a chapter each on six spiritual writers: Richard Rolle, the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Walter Hilton, Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe, and Fr. Augustine Baker.

Rolle, Margery Kempe and Fr. Baker, after carefully assessing the evidence, the author with urbane ruthlessness categorically disqualifies as mystics, though to each (and particularly to Fr. Baker) he allows some real, if lesser excellences. The author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Walter Hilton, and Julian of Norwich, on the other hand, emerge from the adjudication with reputations enhanced rather than diminished, the first two as spiritual guides of solid worth (given the right disciples!), Julian as a mystic in her own right. Somewhat surprisingly, he suggests that Julian was not a "contemplative" in the strict sense at the time of her shewings.

The foregoing remarks may give some idea of the scope of this study. No review, however, could do justice to its quality: its competence, its ease in presentation, its charity. Here is a piece of distilled scholarship, guaranteed to "instruct delightfully."

ANNA MARIA REYNOLDS

OCCASIONAL SERMONS

The Occasional Sermons of Ronald A. Knox, edited with an Introduction by Fr. Philip Caraman, S.J. (Burns and Oates 42s).

TO START with a personal note. This reviewer dwells close to the fields of Runnymede, the scene of a certain amount of civic excitement and official ecstasy at regular intervals. The parish of the

Great Charta. It was in his power over a long period to have invited Mgr. Knox to preach in his church. Now after a careful and excited reading of the *Occasional Sermons* it will be an enduring regret that the chance was missed. Apart from the stimulation of a carefully prepared Knox sermon it would have been interesting to have on record the illuminating but economical manner in which the preacher would have reached behind the fog of Whig enthusiasm to expose the heart of the matter. This he could hardly fail to have done, for in all these sermons there is evidence of the great care taken in the collation of local history, and here was a big movement of the nation's history rippling out across the Atlantic. *Mea maxima culpa!*

Back to the book. There are the usual Knox characteristics: a starting-off point preferably in an Old Testament text; a contextual introduction which teasingly holds the interest so that you wonder by what ingenuity is he going to proceed to the subject in hand; bold and arresting illustrations light up the subject which is then placed in its niche in a larger framework. Nothing is isolated. There is wide knowledge and love of the saints and usually a tender reference to the Mother of God. No one can put so much life into a few lines when it comes to a summary of the career and death of one of our English Martyrs.

The extraordinary thing is that for a man who preached in so many places there is so little repetition, so little borrowing from one sermon for use in another, no old lamps for new. The editor indeed draws attention to the duplication at St. Marie's, Sheffield, and SS. Mary and John, Wolverhampton, of the effective analogy of the arch, a repetition permissible after a five-year interval, and on my own I discovered a repetition in a sermon on the English Martyrs in 1924 of a playful reference to the conventional figures of stained glass window patriarchs originally offered to the boys at Ware in a sermon on St. Joan in 1920.

Among his favourite assignments, it is obvious from the mood which persists even unto print, were the sermons on the founders of the various religious Orders and Congregations preached to the brethren: St. Benedict, St. Dominic, St. Ignatius, and especially St. Philip. In the context of the Catholic revival in England he cannot keep away from Newman and Faber, Fr. Dominic and Fr. Gentili. What stands out is that he was one of us, sharing our loyalties and emotions.

Over the years he became recognised as the Public Orator of the Church in England, the preacher for the great occasion, for this centenary or that jubilee, for the massive panegyric which was not to be heavy yet a responsible tribute to a national figure.

The touching tribute to Cardinal Griffin reprinted from the *Sunday*

Times should dispose once and for all of the idea that this holy priest was unappreciated or unappreciating.

JOHN PREEDY

BRIDLINGTON DIALOGUE

The Bridlington Dialogue, edited and translated by a Religious of C.S.M.V. (Mowbray 84s).

THOUGH HIS NAME does not appear in this exposition of the Augustinian Rule, internal evidence makes it certain that the author is Robert, who served as fourth prior of the house of Austin canons at Bridlington for a few years in the 1150's. He was already known to us, through the studies of Mr. J. S. Purvis, Dr. Beryl Smalley and Professor J. C. Dickinson, as the writer of this work (one manuscript came to light in 1932, when it was purchased by Bodley, another has been more recently identified at Durham, and both are used by the present editor for her text), and also as the compiler of several Scriptural commentaries. Robert was a man of singularly little originality: his writings on Scripture appear to be nothing but conflations of earlier authorities, and he tells us in this *Dialogue* that he has been called a thief and pilferer for his pains. This charge seems to be quite unjust: Dr. Smalley's descriptions of his use of the Gloss indicate that he makes no claim to independence of his sources, and that it is his careful acknowledgement of them which gives his work particular value as historical evidence. The *Dialogue* begins with a frank, witty, learned defence of such practices; and we can see, by his own frequent indications of his borrowings and by the editor's many careful identifications, that what he has here done, for the benefit of his own young and growing community and for the rapidly increasing movement to found houses of Austin canons, is to assemble a sort of poor man's St. Augustine. Written in the age which produced such classics for the religious orders as St. Aelred's *Mirror of Love*, St. Edmund Rich's *Mirror of Holy Church*, and the *Ancrene Riwe*, Robert's book will disappoint those who seek in it for fruitful spiritual reading or for any clearer vision of the medieval life of prayer. Even in his chapters on prayer as directed by the Rule, he shows himself to be dry, precise, academic, skilful in adducing authority but unwilling to go beyond the authorities. At times one is forced to ask what profit some of his gleanings from Augustine could bring to twelfth-century readers in England, especially when we see Augustine struggling with and profiting by the many conflicts between the Old Latin Bible and Jerome's new version which can have had little significance for generations brought up on the Vulgate, debased and corrupted though their copies of Jerome usually were. Thus Robert's copying of

Augustine's clever use of the variant in the Our Father, *et ne nos inferas*, can have been of little help to those who would read either *et ne inducas nos* or *et ne patiaris nos induci*; and one wonders how many of them would fail, as the editor in her notes to p. 141 has failed, to recognise that the "Solomon" quotation, *Qui arguit palam pacem facit*, derives from Augustine's juxtaposition, as his theme for his Sermon 82, of the Old Latin versions of St. Matthew 18: 15 and Proverbs 10: 10. Aelred, one feels, would have allowed the "Discipulus" in his dialogue to interrupt at this point, to ask the "Magister" just what he was talking about; but then, as Aelred himself cheerfully admitted, he had been brought up in a king's kitchen, not at any institute for advanced studies. Robert is a true professor; his pupils are there to be an admiring and usually silent background, and he makes all the jokes himself. He does not even disdain a pun at the Disciple's expense, on p. 66, where the play upon *anglus* might have been rendered, by a translator less closely wedded to her text, as something like "Since you are an Angle, it's a pity you're not more acute." But the editor may well rejoice that the preparation of this text has been no joke; and one would be ungrateful if one did not conclude by saluting the enthusiasm and tenacity and erudition which have given us this hitherto unknown work, so admirably and yet so modestly presented.

ERIC COLLEDGE

IN AND OUT OF LONDON

Passenger to London, by Gerard Fay (Hutchinson 25s).

THE TITLE, the dust-cover and the format of this book are so good that one fears that the contents may not be able to live up to them. "It is a book to dip in, and each chapter is divided on three levels or planes . . . a bit about me on my way to London, a bit about travelling away from London, and a bit about London itself." The reviewer knew the author as a small boy in Dublin, when he was known as Buster, and saw one of his earliest stage appearances in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, when he walked on as page to that giant among Irish actors, his father, Frank Fay. Now London editor of *The Guardian*, Gerard Fay has had an intriguing life. The reviewer could not resist reading the *a* sections of each chapter, the "me on my way to London" bits, right through, and he assures all and sundry that there is never a dull page in these sections. If others have time only to dip into this book, let them not fail to dip into the sections entitled "The Subpostmasteress," "The Flat of Granny's Hand," "My Stage Career" and "Bookie's Clerk": in these passages Dublin life comes alive as it does in the plays of O'Casey, and one wishes that Mr. Fay had given us a whole book of *a* sections. Then the reader

tackles the *b* sections and the *c* sections, and wishes that the author had given him booksful of them, too; in fact "The Beaver and I" and "Dev." are worthy of Boswell himself; while "The Weather and Chartreuse" and "Bostonians and Baltimoreans" are full of good things. If the reader has not already decided to buy this book and keep it by him this review may end with two eloquent, but typical, quotations from the *b* bits. "There is no typographical way of reproducing Lord Beaverbrook's speech, either its accent or its quality, which might remind you of six policemen walking ankle-deep in glass after an accident," and "the surprising thing is that you can sit out in the suburbs of Baltimore and find yourself surrounded by a wall of sound and light more genuine than any European *son et lumière*. At full moon in August I have sat entranced on the back porch of the Dorsey home and felt that at any moment the curtain would go up and we should all have to start making stagey speeches in which every other word would be 'you-all,' pronounced as near as dammit like the Irish town of Youghal." Gerard Fay has something of the insight into people of J. B. Morton and something of the sensitiveness to the spirit of place of H. V. Morton; but the people who kept coming to mind as the reviewer lingered over the pilgrimages to and from London were those of Frank Fay, most eloquent and generous of fathers, and Willie Fay, his brother, as he appeared in Synge's *Well of the Saints*. Ireland, like the author, owes much to them both.

WULSTAN PHILLIPSON

SHORTER NOTICES

Dawn to Dusk, by Marie-Noelle Kelly (Hutchinson 25s).

THIS IS A VERY HUMAN and entertaining book in which Lady Kelly is perhaps at her best when she is describing her youth in Belgium at L'Hermite and Chateau du Petit Somme before the 1914 war brought her to a short and idyllic exile in the home of Lord Kenyon at Gredington in Shropshire. Her Belgian gaiety kept on breaking through the rigid conventions which her parents and grandparents admired, and she pays eloquent tribute to the Augustinian Canonesses of Haywards Heath who understood her so well. The pictures painted of Baron Raymond Snoy and Cardinal Mercier, each resisting the Germans in his own inimitable way, and steeling the people to fortitude, are unforgettable, as is Cardinal Mercier's saying, quoted by Lady Kelly, "Serenity acquired through suffering accepted and vanquished may well prove the most excellent fruit of one's life." *Le Monde* is the title of a lengthy chapter of this book, and it might have been the title of the whole tome; for worldliness and high

society were Lady Kelly's lot as wife of Sir David Kelly, British Ambassador successively in interesting posts in three continents. The chapters on Turkey and Russia are perhaps the most interesting of these, and there is poignancy in the last chapter, which describes Sir David Kelly's all too short retirement at Tara House, Co. Wexford, in his native Ireland, where he died.

Come Dance with Kitty Stobling, by Patrick Kavanagh (Longmans 10s 6d).

THIS BEAUTIFULLY PRODUCED volume of poems, the choice of the Poetry Book Society, contains many old friends which will be recognised by readers of the now defunct Irish periodical *The Bell*. Dubliners who read these poems will be brought back to the *quasi-salon* of the late Mrs. Arthur Darley, who, like Lady Gregory, dispensed tea and barm brack to all her many friends until a late hour every evening in her house near fabled Mount Street Bridge. The two opening poems give us Mr. Kavanagh at his best, and it would be good to hear him recite them again in that downstairs flat on Northumberland Road:

For this soul needs to be honoured with a new dress woven
From green and blue things and arguments that cannot be proven.

"Arguments that cannot be proven" brings back the evenings at Mrs. Darley's, as the following lines bring back the magic of all the reaches of Dublin's Grand Canal:

Fantastic light looks through the eyes of bridges—
And look a barge comes bringing from Athy
And other far-flung towns mythologies.
O commemorate me with no hero-courageous
Tomb—just a canal-seat for the passer-by.

There are several poems in the Kitty Stobling manner which represents the poet's

humble trade
Of versing that can easily
Restore your equanimity
And lay the looney ghosts that goad
The savages of Pembroke Road.

But the poetry of Mr. Kavanagh in less vindictive mood is preferable to these Chestertonian Dublinese verses, and perhaps best of all the thirty-five poems is "In Memory of My Mother" with its perfect opening and final stanzas:

I do not think of you lying in the wet clay
Of a Monaghan graveyard: I see
You walking down a lane among the poplars
On the way to the station. . . .

O you are not lying in the wet clay.
For it is a harvest evening now and we
Are piling up the ricks against the moonlight
And you smile up at us—eternally.

Pestalozzi: The Man and His Work, by Kate Silber (Routledge 32s).

IN A COMPREHENSIVE and up-to-date study, the preparation of the ground and the sowing of the seed of Pestalozzi's on modern education is well described. Documents, hitherto unpublished, are given in an appendix and the reader senses the atmosphere that pervaded the civilised world during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, that all children should have the right to equality of opportunity. Heinrich Pestalozzi, in his struggle for this end, is shown to have been clearer-sighted than many of his contemporaries because he took into account the varying circumstances of heredity, home environment and sense of vocation. That he failed in almost everything he tried to do is pathetically and well narrated but it provokes the reader to look for causes of his failures and so to sift the good grain from the rather immaterial chaff. The early chapters, dealing with Pestalozzi's youth, his political struggles and his early writings tax the reader's patience by their very ponderous, complicated style, but Miss Silber warms to her task and writes with greater ease and simplicity as the story moves on, and it is a moving story. There is a great deal of unnecessary repetition which leads to confusion, yet the man emerges and, despite his "way of ambivalent thinking," much of his method is clearly understood. The parallel movements in other countries are well-represented, especially in the appendices. This book should not adorn only the shelves of the libraries of Education Departments and Training Colleges, but should reach a much wider public. All prospective teachers would derive inspiration and profit from reading it and it would appeal to all who realise the importance of the family as the social unit as well as to those who have faith in human nature. Miss Silber, with her profound knowledge of her subject, has brought Pestalozzi to life again. He was a good, God-fearing man, with a great love for his fellow-men, determined to retain his faith in their fundamental goodness.

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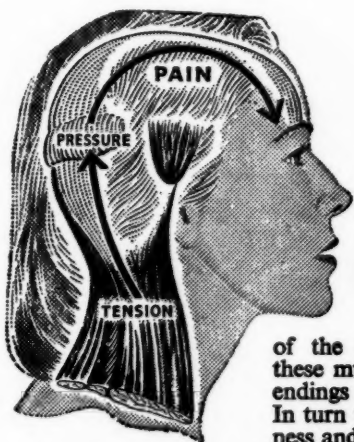
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ONE of the great occupational risks of business life under the pressure of to-day is that the practical man of affairs neglects his outside reading, and all too easily falls into a narrow circle of immediate preoccupations. There is always loss in this, and the Catholic business or professional man, as a member of the Church Universal, has a particularly strong reason for keeping his mind open to wider horizons. Certainly it was never more necessary than now to follow world happenings. A direct chain of causes and effects ties every business to economical changes in the world, which are themselves as often the consequence as the cause of changes in men's political and social ideas. These ideas in their turn come out of the religions, or irreligions, of contemporary man.

In many countries the Catholic Church is at the heart of the battle of ideas. Cardinal Manning's saying that "all great quarrels between men are at bottom theological" suggests that there is, in fact, no better starting-point or background for understanding the modern world than a Catholic one. Because of this approach and background

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